NEWS / A2

INXS front man redefines role of a rock star

ENTERTAINMENT / E6

Tita Muñoz: RP's first multimedia star

METRO / A17

2 accused in Alicia Ramos slay case found guilty; third accused acquitted

BPI 155

SEE PANORAMIC SECTION-F

In wars, quest for media balance also a battlefield

PARTICULARLY VEXING FOR MANY AMERICAN news organizations in the struggle to determine how and to what proportion images of civilian dead and injured should be displayed in their coverage, especially when one side's casualties greatly surpass the other.

"Still photos and TV images are what sway people," said Jane Arraf, the Edward R. Murrow press

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Tuesday, August 15, 2006 ★★ / Vol. 21 / No. 248

www.inq7.net

Stressed out? Expert recommends singing

LONDON—STRESSED-OUT Londoners are being offered a new way to unwind—singing lessons.

Professionally trained singer Kai in Kos Asghil runs stress-busting classes for city high fliers that aim a

Fragile peace in Lebanon

War leaves 1,250 dead but yields no victors

BEIRUT, LEBANON—Guns fell silent across Lebanon on Monday after a ceasefire took effect to end 34 days of war between Israel and Hezbollah that killed more than 1,250 people and wounded thousands.

Diplomats expect the truce to be fragile—tens of thousands of Israeli troops remain in southern Lebanon, and they are not expected to withdraw fully until international peacekeepers arrive.

Two shooting incidents soon after the ceasefire went into force underlined how shaky the peace was.

In the first incident, a Hezbollah fighter was shot dead after he fired on Israeli troops in southwestern Lebanon, Israel's Army Radio said. Hours later, Israeli troops shot and possibly killed a Hezbollah militant aiming his rifle at them.

Israeli air strikes and artillery fire continued until just a few minutes before the truce took effect at 6 a.m. (1 p.m., Manila time).

Then there was silence.

At least 38 Lebanese civilians and four soldiers were killed on the last day of fighting as Israeli forces pursued their battle to wipe out Hezbollah's cadre the last minute.

The chaos of the battlefield yielded no clear victor.

Despite a desperate 11th-hour push by Israel, it appeared that the might of the Israeli military, with its fearsome array of war jets, smart bombs, tanks and divisions had been fought to a standstill by a small group of Hezbollah guerrillas.

How did that happen?

It wasn't quite the David vs Goliath conflict it seemed on the surface, analysts said.

As Israeli troops moved in, they encountered a highly trained, deeply motivated foe, armed with sophisticated weapons and tactics and a well-borne turf advantage.

Israel tried to counter this with

FRAGILE A4

BUNKER oil from a sunken tanker off Guimaras has reached mangrove areas in the coastal village of Alaguin Norte, Barangay La Paz, in the island province's Nueva Valencia town.

Oil spill off Guimaras could reach Boracay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas
and Leila B. Salaverria
in Manila

THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD is racing against time to contain what its officials say could be the worst spill in the country after an oil tanker carrying 2 million liters of bunker fuel sank on Friday off Guimaras Island.

If not contained, the spill could reach Boracay Island, a popular tourist destination famed for its white sand and clear waters, according to a PCG official.

"I can't rule out the possibility that Boracay would be affected. It would depend on whether the oil further spreads out on the direction of the wind and current," said Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Cuenca, the Coast Guard spokesperson.

The spill already covered 24 sq km as of yesterday and was moving along the coast of Nueva Valencia town (pop: 34,808) in Guimaras.

OIL SPILL A4

'The most dangerous day in this war'

By Waldon Bello
Contributor

(Editor's Note: The writer is a member of the 12-person Civil Society-Parliamentary Peace Mission that is currently in Lebanon. He is a professor of sociology at the University of the Philippines and the executive director of the research and advocacy institute Focus on the Global South, based in Bangkok, Thailand.)

BEIRUT, LEBANON—IT IS 6:17 A.M. here and Monday, Aug. 14. In less than an hour, the ceasefire is due to take effect.

I got awakened by two massive blasts. They seemed very close, but the sounds were probably coming from southern Beirut, and I am in central Beirut.

The Israelis are bombing up till the last minute. They are unbelievable.

But I am getting ahead of my story.

Yesterday, we were in south Beirut. About two hours after we left, we heard blasts coming from Israeli shells falling on the Shiite neighborhoods in the area.

"We could have been there," Rep. Mujib Hasanan of Mindanao said quietly.

The images of flattened buildings, still smoldering ruins and crushed, dust-covered cars are still fresh in our minds—the seedy bars, the child strollers, and the books I saw as I clambered over the ruins of a 12-story building at the neighborhood of Haret Hreik.

"Today is the most dangerous day in this war," the nonracist managed told us as the delegation sat down for lunch, thankful for our good luck but also very angry at the Israelis.

THE MOST A4

5 dead as landslide sweeps bus into ravine

By Michael Lim Ubac
Inquirer Mindanao

MUD LOOSENED BY HEAVY rains from a mountain swept an air-conditioned bus to Asuncion town in Zamboanga del Sur yesterday, killing five passengers.

A pregnant woman was also killed when a mudslide swept a makeshift chapel in Davao yesterday in another part of the town. The woman and her family had sought shelter in the chapel in Barangay Ateneng, according to Asuncion Mayor Enrique Cabahug.

Cabahug said mud carried the Mindanao Road Transit bus 100 meters from the highway into a ravine. The vehicle was one of three buses stranded on the highway because of an earlier landslide.

Eight people have died in floods and mudslides triggered by rains in Zamboanga del Sur and Lanao del Norte over the past week. Thousands were forced to abandon their homes.

Floods also hit Negros Occidental.

Portions of the national highway connecting Lanao del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur remained impassable at press time.

Ruby Sevilla, 46, said she and other passengers were waiting for local public works personnel to clear the road when they heard a roaring sound. Then, mud came flowing from the side of the mountain in the village of Bi-

LANDS A6

₱500-M repatriation fund pushed

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

DESPITE THE EMPTY RELOCATION centers in Lebanon and a UN-enforced ceasefire, President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration is bent on forcing the evacuation of Filipino workers there and seeking a ₱500-million repatriation fund from Congress.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr., Labor Undersecretary Manuel Imson and Overseas Workers Welfare Administration chief Marianito Roque impressed this creative during yesterday's consumption of the Senate finance committee's hearing on the fund and a ₱46.4-billion supplemental budget for 2006.

They said officials were unsure as to how long the ceasefire would last and that fighting could flare up anew if there were violations of the truce.

Besides, Roque said, Philippine Embassy officials wanted to take advantage of the ceasefire to rescue Filipino workers from abusive employers and those who

₱500-M A6

Impeach case backed by 7 boxes of evidence

By Michael Lim Ubac

MONTE JOSE

That's how the House majority is fronting seven boxes purportedly containing evidence that opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said they would present in their second attempt to impeach her.

With great fanfare, the House minority that has now bungled a similar attempt to unseat Mr. Arroyo announced it would try and open the boxes at the start today of the hearing of the justice committee on the opposition's impeachment complaint this year.

"We have the truth, and we want to expose it to the full light of day," said Deputy Minority Leader Aint Peter Cayetano.

The committee will decide whether the impeachment complaint has substance that will elevate it to full trial in the Senate.

"This being a numbers game, I'm not sure whether we still had substance by the completed," said Rep. Salacnib Baterina, indicating that the opposition initiative, backed by civilians also seeking Mr. Arroyo's ouster, will

IMPEACH A6

PROMPTU PACHMENT lawmakers present the boxes of evidence to support their case against President Macapagal-Arroyo in a press conference at the Batasan.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Second FRONTPAGE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2006

WEATHER FORECAST

'Don't link terror bill to killings'

By Bill C. Cabacungan Jr. and Luige A. del Puerto

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY SAID TIME WAS running out on the passage of the antiterrorism bill and chided the opposition in the Senate for using the bill as a bargaining chip.

"We must be having time against terror amidst the resurgence of global threats. Must we wait until the next bomb explodes before we act on this vital piece of legislation," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in a statement.

"The passage of the antiterrorism law should not be subjected to partisan bargaining as it involves a fight against evil that calls for collective, willful action."

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr. had said the upper chamber would only hold President Macapagal-Arroyo's appeal to pass the antiterror bill only if political killings were stopped.

The President reiterated the need to pass a law which would give more teeth to laws against terrorism in the wake of the foiled plot to bomb US-bound aircraft from the UK.

The antiterror bill was supported to have been enacted before the end of last year.

"We cannot rest and tell that the government is doing all it can to bring the killers of political activists and journalists to justice. Using this issue as a bargaining chip for action on the antiterror bill is unfair. It is fundamental that the government itself has a hand on the said killings when in fact it has not," Bunye said.

The country's top cop yesterday also asked senators not to link the passage of the antiterror bill to the solution of the political killings.

"The passage of the antiterror bill should not be equated or should not be related to the solution of the killings," Philippine National Police chief Director General Oscar Calderon said.

"Those [are] are different," he said, lamenting that the Philippines remains one of the countries without an antiterror bill.

PNP Deputy Director General Avelino Razon Jr., head of Task Force Usig which is investigating the cases of murders, said not all suspects in the killings had come from the ranks of the police and military.

Some suspects were communist guerrillas, he pointed out.

In a statement, Pimentel said an antiterror bill was urgently needed but only when "the government shows its sincerity and determination in curbing and prosecuting killings" attributed to security forces of government.

The police have claimed that the killings could be the result of a purge within the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army.

But militant and independent lawmakers said the style of the killings, their frequency, and the targeting of persons espousing a program identified with CPP-inclined party might be part of the Arroyo regime's national security policy.

Over 200 activists have been murdered since Ms Arroyo assumed power in 2001. The human rights group Karapatan placed the number at more than 700.

In an interview, Calderon said he has given commanders in areas where there have been killings seven weeks in order the cases.

"We are already very late [in passing an antiterror law]," Razon lamented, adding that police are prosecuting terrorism "using outmoded laws."

Without the proposed antiterror bill, a suspect could be detained even without a warrant for a longer period than currently allowed by law.

Others also want to be allowed to intercept and place a suspect under surveillance.

The bill would also impose stiffer penalties on convicted terrorists, such as life imprisonment or death, and allow authorities to freeze assets of suspected terrorist organizations.

'Even rock stars could use their fame to change the world'

By Pinlada Concepcion
Lifestyle Editor

A RISE AGAIN STORY IS ONE who's usually aware [and conscious about] the things that come out of his mouth and records because they affect the minds, hearts, opinions and decisions of the youth," said 26 Fortune, new front man of IV 18.

The Australian group, arguably the biggest rock band in the world in the late 1980s (their sixth album "Kick," released in 1987, counted into the mainstream and sold nearly 35 million copies worldwide), is in the country for a single gig tonight at the Araneta Coliseum. Manila is the first stop in the Asian leg of the band's first world tour in nine years, to promote "Switch," their first album in eight years.

Fortune, 31, had replaced the charismatic singer/songwriter Michael Hutchence who died in 1997, an unconfirmed suicide.

During the band's brief meeting with the press yesterday at the Edsa Shangri-La in Mandaluyong City, Fortune urged, "Don't change those TV channels ... if [the news is] depressing. For tomorrow ...and make yourself aware of [you are]. And there's a chance for those bad stuff to go away. [In that way] we could all be rock stars."

Fortune, a Canadian born in Ontario, now an 11-week worldwide reality talent search on television for your personal protégé to find INXS a new lead singer. (The band had gone on a hiatus following the death of Hutchence.) Among the top three finalists of the show, "Rock Star: INXS" was Filipino-Australian singer MIG Ayesa, precisely to find INXS a new lead singer. (The band had gone on a hiatus following the death of Hutchence.) Among the top three finalists of the show, "Rock Star: INXS" was Filipino-Australian singer MIG Ayesa, precisely to find INXS a new lead singer.

He seemed to imply that he was inclined to do the same at the band's special guest.

At the press con, Fortune was asked about rock stars who lived but not died young, apparent victims of the trappings and pressures of celebrity—among them Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, Jim Morrison and the original rock star, Elvis Presley.

Fortune said it shouldn't be the rule. "Even rock stars could use their fame to change the world," he said, and cited U2 front man Bono, who convinced First World leaders to write off poor countries' debts. This, and Bono's other socially relevant activities helped transform the image of rock stars, Fortune said.

He seemed to imply that he was inclined to do the same at the band's special guest.

"Every time I turn on the TV there's conflict and war, babies being bombed ... in California, there are 14-year-old kids who have tattoos in kindergarten—not on the ... to be so. I'm so concerned, a rock star has a moral and social obligation to write about those observations and let people make up their minds and not merely anybody to anybody. Because to be real we're all just human beings."

Indeed, one of Fortune's trademarks is a twist across on his forearm that say exactly that: "Human Being."

Original INXS member Kirk Pengilly, Garry Gary and the Radio Brothers Tim, Andrew and Jon, normal context to let their fame outside the talking yesterday. Asked about the difference between touring then and now, they simply noted remote header or airport-seeing instead scenes.

"But there's still free champagne on board," guitarist Tim Farriss said playfully. Turning serious, he added, "In many respects, the world and the audience have not changed, and neither have we. We still have to crush; as many people as possible so impact our music with as much passion as before."

JD, the lone man, attributed this Manila visit to, well, "Fortune. We've made it here under the grace of the and Fortune and God ... is just be able to have a good time [with you]."

THE AND FORTUNE. JD Fortune (right hand in a peace sign), core front man of the Australian band INXS, says anyone can be a rock star but some will always be more famous than others. The group, the world's biggest rock band in the late 1980s, is in Manila for a single gig tonight. With JD, from left: Andrew Farriss, Gary Beers, Tim Farriss, Jon Farriss and Kirk Pengilly.

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Bodies of 3 ABC-5 news crew members flown to Manila

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

SAGA CITY—THE REMAINS OF THREE news crew members of television network ABC-5, who died in a road collision in Pampanga, Cotabato Sun. on Sunday, were flown yesterday morning to Manila aboard two helicopters provided by the Philippine Air Force.

The helicopters which took off from the Bigaa City Sports Complex here, were used to help bring the remains of Analiza "Hazel" Becheta, 37, senior reporter; Arnel Ordiz, 42, cameraman; and Ismael "Manny" Cabagnot, 40, assistant cameraman and driver.

The ABC-5 team rushed to Pampanga after the accident and arranged for the airlift of the remains to Manila.

"The management and staff of ABC-5 deeply mourn the tragic death of our news personnel reporter Hazel Becheta and cameramen Arnel Ordiz and Ismael Cabagnot. They died in the line of duty," the TV network said in a statement.

ABC-5 said it will announce funeral arrangements as soon as they are finalized.

In Mabalacat, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday conveyed to the families of the three ABC-5 news members whose death she said, was a "sad day for Philippine journalism and Philippine public."

"The Free Family and I share in the grief of the families, friends and co-workers of ABC-5 friend Becheta-Cabagnot and TV crew members Arnel Ordiz and Ismael Cabagnot, who perished in a road accident after completing their duty of reporting the news to the public," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

Ms Arroyo said Becheta, a former member of the Malacañang Press Corps, would be remembered for her "fair and objective reporting." "The mother crew will be missed by public officials and other leaders," she said.

Becheta covered the Palace beat during the administration of former President Joseph Estrada.

The ABC-5 van carrying the three victims collided on Sunday with a tractor-trailer at 4:45 p.m. in Del Rosario, Pampanga town, killing the three on the spot.

The vehicle was a total wreck. It took two hours for the police and the Subdelian Groups Sibol to remove their bodies underneath the bus.

Jose Gonzales, another ABC-5 crew member, said the victims left Legaspi City at past 1 p.m. after covering Mt. Mayon and dropped by Sari to buy pilona candies an hour before the accident.

Gonzales said they left earlier at 10:30 p.m. and were already in Quezon province when Becheta sent him a text message at around 3:54 p.m., telling him they were still in Naga City.

"That was the last time she responded to my messages," he said.

Gonzales said they learned of the accident from a reporter who called him up at 5:30 p.m. when they were already in Dagbilao, Quezon.

Becheta, who has been with ABC-5 since 1999, left behind a one-year-old child while Cotabato had three children. With a report from Christine O. Avendaño

Tell bodies of three ABC 5 TV crew who were killed in a road accident in Pampanga, Carmelino Sun, arrive at Villamor Air Base. AFP PHOTO

'Garci' men promotion defended

By Philip C. Tubeza

ADMINISTRATION allies in Congress yesterday defended the promotion of former Election Commissioners Virgilio Garcillano's protégés to the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

Representative Edcel Lagman, Liberal, chair of the House committee on basic education and development, and Eduardo Ermita (SPC, Lepto), a member of the powerful Commission on Appointments, said that mere allegations of poll fraud against them were not grounds to withhold their promotion.

They pointed out that the promotions were based on the Comelec officials' service records and the absence of any formal complaint against them.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. on Sunday scored the promotion of four Election officials, namely, Rey Bautista, Resurreccion Borra, Lucenito Tagle and Armando Velasco, all of whom were involved in the alleged fraud in the 2004 elections in Mindanao.

The senator alleged that they helped rig the results of the May 2004 elections to ensure Senator Panfilo Lacson's defeat.

Opposition groups also called for the promotion of the four officials to be stalled because of "unsubstantiated allegations."

"If the promoted Comelec officials have not been charged, then there is no reason to stall their assumption, more so, if they have good service records," he said.

Ople, a lawyer, said Pimentel and the rest of the opposition had no reason [illegible] to file charges or initiate impeachment complaints against top Comelec officials linked to the "Hello Garci" scandal.

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Clients of spider veins with Harmony Treatment

Oil spill off Guimaras could reach Boracay

From page A1

The PCG estimates that 200,000 liters of bunker fuel contained in the tankers MT Solar 1 has spilled into the sea. "Over 10,000 liters of spilled oil is already considered massive. Its amount like this is a national emergency," Cayme said.

Cayme said the PCG would call on private companies, such as Shell and Caltex, to lend their oil spill booms to ensure that the fuel would not spread further.

Harold Herbie, Coast Guard-Iloilo station commander, said the oil spill was so big that it could match the Semirara incident, referring to the oil spill off Semirara Island in Antique late last year. A power barge ran aground on Dec. 18 and spilled at least 364,320 liters of bunker fuel.

Environment regional director Julius Sembrano said the oil spill had already caused damage to the environment but the extent had yet to be determined.

The spill threatens the rich fishing grounds, mangroves and beaches of the islands/province of Guimaras. It could damage a national marine reserve and fisheries research center in Barangay La Paz on Tatlong Island in Nueva Valencia.

Capt. Luis Tuason Jr., Coast Guard commander in Western Visayas, said the spill could reach Negros Island because of the southwesterly direction of the wind and waves.

He said coastal barangays of towns in the western part of Negros, especially those south of Bacolod City, should prepare.

Iligo Cáñez, civil defense assistant regional director who joined a Coast Guard aerial survey of the damage, yesterday said that the spill had spread to the coast of some portions of Guimaras and that 14 barangays were expected to be hit.

The spill has already affected 10 coastal barangays—Cabalagnan, Cauhaunan, Dolores, Estancia, Igdalanipalay, La Paz, Lucmayan, San Antonio, San Roque and Tando...one of the 22 villages of Nueva Valencia, according to Mayor Glenlaide Gonzaga.

"It is very wide and we need assistance," Gonzaga said.

The Coast Guard is making head assessment, especially that, in mid-day who have stopped fishing, their main source of income, since Sunday, according to the mayor. It is making to bring spill booms, skimmers, oil dispersants, and other equipment to Guimaras.

Tuason said sailboats loaded with equipment were expected to reach the area late yesterday afternoon.

Bamboo poles

The local government has started distributing bamboo poles and absorbent materials, like dried grass and dagami (coir straw), to residents to help contain the spill.

Nueva Valencia has the biggest area and the second biggest population among the five towns of Guimaras — Sibunag, Buenavista, San Lorenzo and Jordan, the capital.

Guimaras Gov. JC Rahuman Nava said a state of calamity was expected to be declared for Nueva Valencia yesterday.

Nava said the shoreline in the affected villages was covered with thick, dark oil. "We are concerned with the long-term impact on and damage to the island and the people," the governor said.

The Solar 1 and 24 km southwest of Guimaras late Friday afternoon, according to Fariñas The 906-ton tanker, owned by Sunshine Maritime Development Corp., is under contract with giant oil firm Petron to ship fuel to Western Mindanao Power Corp. in Zamboanga del Sur.

It was carrying 1,10,000 barrels or 2 million liters of bunker fuel in 10 tanks. It left Limay, Bataan, on Wednesday.

Abandon ship

Ship captain Norberto Aguinaldo Coast Guard officials that at around 1 a.m. on Friday, he sought shelter at the Guimaras Strait due to big waves and strong winds. He reported that the ship's chain broke had taken in water.

The ship remained aground at around 3 p.m. after it reported that it had pumped out the water using submersible pumps.

Aguinaldo ordered the crew to abandon ship at around 4 p.m. after they lost control of the vessel when it shook in its tight.

Sixteen of the 18 crew members reached the shores of Nueva Valencia. Two surveyors aboard the ship were rescued. Two crew members have remained missing.

Sembrano said the Coast Guard learned about the incident on Saturday morning after the executive of the crew was reported.

Tuason said Sunday's search and rescue operations for the barrier oil could be as up-to-date because of water pressure. The tanker, which sank to a depth of 800 meters, is beyond the reach of divers.

"We need the assistance of foreign salvage companies to siphon off the remaining fuel," Tuason said. With reports from Tarra Quismundo and Carla P. Gomez, Inquirer Visayas

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Stressed . . .

From page A1

science of yoga, Alexander Technique and breathing exercises to relieve tension—all used by singers to ease up before they perform.

"I got the idea to construct the classes in a way so [non-breathing] people can use it to empty themselves and get relaxed," she said.

Hochaphel has run classes in Silva Hall for the past year, but she has just started in the bustling financial district of Canary Wharf where people are noticeably uptight.

"These people are so stressed," she said. "I was trying to distribute posters about my classes and normally I don't have difficulty getting in contact with people but it was so hard to get one contact."

Hochaphel said she sensed people's fear, which she put down to anxiety about doing well in their jobs. "It's the competition—you sense that."

Thousands of cash-clad workers stream out of Canary Wharf underground station at each hour on weekdays, hurrying to get to their high-rise offices where they put in long hours with few breaks but plenty of stress.

According to Hochaphel, the physical and mental processes involved in singing help alleviate tension on the whole body, but especially the neck.

"All your ligaments are connected to the outer, so the way you hold even your sternum affect how your voice sounds," she said.

Breathing

Hochaphel, who trained in Cologne and New York, starts her class with breathing exercises. She asks people to imagine their bodies as a tube through which air flows.

"It's an ancient way to unleash energy and relax and tone the body and mind," she said.

Hochaphel then gets the class to throw a ball to each other and the persons holding the ball has to sing a phrase from a song.

In one session, the exercise produced: "The hills are alive with the sound of music," "Sex Maria," and "Sex and drugs and rock and roll."

"It's like melody dialogue which can be very funny and because it's funny you forget about other things," Hochaphel said.

Stress is responsible for 12.8 million lost working days a year in Britain, translating into almost £185.4 billion in lost revenue, according to Gabrielle Goddard, an executive coach who offers courses on how to deal with stress.

Equilibrium

Goddard, who is currently working on an extensive program at US investment bank Lehman Brothers, said the symptoms of stress—such as a faster heart rate and increased blood supply to the brain—can lead to some positive benefits.

"It was great when we had to fight bears," she said.

But today, people find it hard to de-stress and return the body to equilibrium, according to Goddard. "We can forget how to switch off the on switch."

Goddard's sessions at Lehman Brothers highlight areas relieving strategies, including exercise, as well as adopting a different perspective on the work environment.

"I get people to be silent for five minutes and just look out of the window. That helps to calm people down and get the heart in equilibrium," Goddard said.

Employers have become more aware of stress in terms of ill health and also litigation. People can claim work-related stress under British employment legislation under health and safety rules or as a breach of contract.

Increasing numbers of companies in the United States are offering employees massage and yoga onsite, not only to de-stress people but to encourage them to stay at their computer rather than move to another.

Less conventional

Some places have come up with less conventional ways of getting people to unwind.

It has in China late customers punch stuff and smash glasses to unleash pent-up anger. In the Philippines, residents flock to a restaurant in Cavite, Tagalog, where they can smash plates against a "wall of fury."

Perhaps the most extreme, thus men in terms of wanting to suffer stress, according to Goddard, "Women want to know how to juggle their lives better."

Hochaphel, who performs jazz and cabaret in London, also found women more receptive to her unusual teachings.

Men, however, are slower to line classes. "But it's always fewer men than women—after a pity," she said.

Reuters

Senate to probe use of Owwa fund in 'Smokey' project

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SENATE INQUIRY INTO THE use of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) fund for the Smokey Mountain housing project would begin next week, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada said yesterday.

Scheduled to be pulled are Brgy. Ramon, who owns B.G. Builders, which is developing the former garbage dump into a resettlement and commercial complex, and former President Fidel V. Ramos. It was during Ramos' term that the Smokey Mountain project was implemented, Estrada said at the Kapihan sa Manila forum.

Romero, who has yet to receive an invitation from the Senate, said he was willing to testify. He had already attended five Senate investigations on the same project, he told the Inquirer yesterday in a phone interview, and there was no reason for him to evade this latest invitation.

In the Senate, Estrada explained that the Senate investigation was a result of a resolution filed by Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago calling for the investigation of Ramos for the alleged plunder of P500 million in Owwa funds used in the Smokey Mountain project.

Santiago filed the resolution after an audition from the Commission on Audit had testified before the Senate that the Home Guaranty Corp. (HGC) had paid the principal amount of P500 million in Owwa in 2002. This was because B.G. Builders defaulted upon the maturity of the asset participation certificates (APCs) in 2000 when these already amounted to P691 million.

APCs are government securities issued to investors in the project.

Ramos had maintained that he did not take the P500 million nor ordered Owwa to invest in the Smokey Mountain project. He also said he was willing to appear before the Senate.

Romero, in the same phone interview, denied that B.G. defaulted when the APCs matured. He also said there was nothing wrong with Owwa investing money in the housing project, adding that under the Senate Bureau Act or Republic Act No. 9247, government institutions were allowed to invest up to a certain amount in housing projects.

TWO buses remain on the road in Aurora, Zamboanga del Sur. Landslides earlier swept away a third bus, killing five passengers.

BIG waves demolished this house in the village of White Beach in Pagadian City.

5 dead as landslide sweeps bus into ravine

From page A-1

number of arrested Moros.

Revilla said all she did was ensure the safety for mother, Pelima Gando Ali, was not unlawfully used was learned later.

Catubig said none of the people on the bus died. "Those who died were passengers who were outside the bus and were caught by the road," he said.

State of calamity

The mayor identified one of the fatalities as Arlina Alibin, 35, a passenger in Tungawan town, Zamboanga Sibugay. Three others remained unidentified, while a child was reported missing.

Zamboanga del Sur Gov. Aurora Cerilles declared a state of calamity in the hamlets of Barura and Tukanan and in Pagadian City.

Big waves in Pagadian swept 45 homes in the coastal village of White Beach. The waves also damaged 20 houses, an elementary school, a daycare center and a mangrove reforestation project.

Tukanan, Lanao del Norte, a municipality about seven kilometers from Iligan City, was also hit by flash floods that damaged 1,500 families moved to higher grounds as floods hit 16 villages, according to the Philippine National Red Cross provincial administrator Rhodora Cerilles.

Drowned

Cerilles said an undetermined elderly man and a child drowned when they tried to cross the floodwater to get into a small banca.

"The rain did not stop. There was a landslide and flooding, and some houses were covered in mud," said Chief Insp. Florante Pagsuin, Iligan police director.

The exact number of those affected could not be ascertained. Senior Supt. Liang Bagol, chief of the Lanao del Norte police, said some persons unaccounted for immediately reached.

"We received information about missing people, but we could not verify that yet," Bagol said.

Food, clothing, medicine

The governors have sought emergency shelter at the municipal gym, day care centers, schools, churches and multipurpose halls of other villages injured by floods.

"We need immediate assistance like food and water, clothing as these people had been soaked by heavy rains. We also need medicine because most of the evacuees may catch diseases," Cerilles said.

In Negros Occidental, floods in four days and rain events affected 90,304 people, damaged 2,577 houses and destroyed 265 others.

Silvan Ice water the towns of Valladolid, San Enrique and Pulupandan, according to Nelson Delante, provincial disaster management team (PDMT) chief.

Heavy rains placed the three towns under a state of calamity.

The PDMT, together with the Barotac Viejo Chinese Chamber of Commerce, Barotac Chamber Volunteer Fire Brigade and the 90 Ipmc Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, distributed relief goods to 2,000 residents of Valladolid, San Enrique and Pulupandan Monday, according to Orbeta.

The provincial government and the local government units have also been assisting the flood victims.

Valladolid Mayor Ricardo Perlas and San Enrique Mayor Israel Tabiliran said most of the floodwaters had subsided yesterday. With reports from Jacqui S. del Puerto in Manila and Carlo P. Gloria, Inquirer Visayas

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'The most dangerous day in this war'

From page A1

"They know that people will lie down their guard now that a ceasefire has been agreed to. But they won't make things worse. I'm sure for as until the very last minute."

Rabih Chahal, the Lebanese activist coordinating the visit of our 12 members Civil Society Parliamentary delegation, agreed. "They won't accept the fact that they're not been able to beat Hezbollah, so they'll terrorize the civilian population till the very end."

Shattered legs

After walking through the ruins earlier in the day, we moved on to the Beirut University General Hospital. We briefly visited Nina Chahal, a 27 year old mum with terrified and external wounds.

She had her legs blown out of a minibus when an Israeli jet bombed the bridge at the Casino du Liban that we had to take to drive around on the way to Beirut.

Confined at a nearby room was Khaleh Mohammad, a 66 year old grandmother whose legs were shattered after the roof of her house collapsed on her when Israeli warplanes pounded her village in southern Lebanon.

"Israel is a tyrannical state," she told us. "You should go down there and see for yourselves."

CHILDREN hold part of a 700-meter banner covered with drawings and writing expressing relief following the UN-brokered ceasefire between Israel and Hezbollah. AP

1M displaced people

Mr Jumblatt in the Emir II Ghoul in downtown Beirut, which serves as temporary quarters for 355 people from 66 families from the south. One million Lebanese have been displaced by the war, as the conditions of the people we met were typical of those of a full third of the country.

The integration of the refugees into old neighborhoods brings its share of problems, "said Chahal. "The Hezbollah, however, is trying its best to provide the social services to support the people in this refined."

Children of war

Children and adolescents filled the courtyard and greeted our delegation with glee, taking advantage of every photo opportunity. For a few moments, we formed by the sea of smiles, the war seemed far away.

The youngest ones broke out in an shower when Vijaya Chandran, one of our delegation members who has worked with women and children in India, waved and talked in them.

Then they broke out into a chant that invoked the name of Hezbollah leader Hasan Nasrallah. The chant translated roughly into: "Nasrallah, we're with you! Russian bomb hit ours."

A human disaster

After the lunch, disrupted by the sounds of Israeli bombs falling in south Beirut, we spent most of the afternoon with Lebanese nongovernment organizations assessing the scale of the humanitarian and ecological disaster and looking ahead to a post-ceasefire cooperation.

Two massive blasts later stopped our discussion, but one Lebanese official went on talking, telling us that the sounds came from Israeli Navy boats shelling south Beirut a few miles away.

The booming sounds from multi-ton bombs rang out through our dinner in a restaurant later in the afternoon. But they couldn't stop the people at a nearby table from carousing loudly.

Stoic people

The Israelis were bombing up to the last hour to intimidate the Lebanese but it wasn't working.

Most people were very angry, but they've used to war and were not about to let it get in the way of their lives.

These are stoic people.

STIEBEL ELTRON
Microshare

Impeach case backed by 7 boxes of evidence

From page A1

ner, he observed.

The complaint is one of eight filed this year but the seven others were thrown out because they fell within the one-year ban for filing an impeachment case.

Last year, allies of Mr Arroyo roundly trashed the opposition move to amend Mr Arroyo over charges she rigged the 2004 presidential election.

"Clearly, the nation cannot move on, and even choose, a successor now on with the ruling Presidency, as long as the truth is obfuscated," said Cayetano.

'Cheap publicity'

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles described the impeachment move as "a cheap publicity gimmick," saying the opposition knows fully well that it could not introduce evidence before the determination of substance.

The plenary rejects the complaint, it finds to look it at least 60 session days, or the full chamber can vote for or against the impeachment of the President. At least 77 votes, or a third of the 229 membership of HR, can send the complaint to the Senate for trial.

The eight complaints, which was found on Wednesday to be sufficient in form, charges the President with culpable violation of the Constitution, betrayal of public trust, bribery and graft and corruption.

Santiago said that even without presentation of evidence, the committee would allow a full-blown recital and discussion of the causes of action—the specific allegations or instances cited in the complaint to support the four grounds for impeachment.

"There are many causes of action. The debates will go from one cause of action to the other, and the debates may take long," said Santiago, explaining that the committee had not yet made up its mind on the fate of the complaint.

Asked about rumors that the majority would find the complaint substantial, Santiago said:

"I'm sure that every member of the committee on justice will have its own way of explaining whether the charges, or the causes of action, are substantial enough to impeach the President, or to find substance and, therefore, make a report to the plenary for the impeachment of the President."

But he said he did not think the majority would race for impeachment.

Truth hidden in boxes

Cayetano said the truth remained hidden in the seven boxes. If the boxes were to be opened, "the charges are not only beyond reasonable doubt but beyond any doubt."

"The evidence are already under custody, the criminal is still at large," he said, pointing out that the boxes purportedly contained evidence of "unbridled ex-post facto economic, legal, political, operational, and other damaging and convicting evidence" against the betrays.

He said the evidence on allegations that Mr. Arroyo stole the 2004 election included the "Hello Garci" tapes, election pamphlets, still photographs and sworn statements by persons involved in cheating.

Cayetano said the corruption charge against the President was supported by a report of bank accounts and other financial transactions and a Commission on Audit report on the alleged P728-million fertilizer scam.

He said there were other material, documentary and testimonial evidence on political repression, extrajudicial killings and forced disappearances.

See and appreciate

"All these we ask our colleagues in Congress to see and appreciate, so that truth and justice can prevail," said Cayetano. "We're not asking them to Congress and the Filipino people."

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said sufficiency of substance simply meant that the charges were impeachable offenses. "I," said Leah Navarro, one of the private complainants, follow complainant Jose Cabanos said: "We can't go on like this; things are not transparent. So deal or no deal? Money or honor?"

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No hurry to Lafayette mine test, says DENR

THERE'S NO NEED TO RUSH THE trial run of a copper and gold mine of Australian firm Lafayette Mining Ltd. after it was shut for pollution violations last year, Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes told a news conference yesterday.

"The test run might have been taking longer than expected, but we should not rush it," Reyes said.

The government allowed Lafayette to hold a 30-day test run in its Rapu-Rapu polymetallic project on a remote island southeast of Manila from July 15.

Many expected that the 30-day test run should have ended on Aug. 13, but mining officials said that the counting of the trial run was based on the actual test operation at Rapu-Rapu.

The mining project, one of 16 being processed by the government to review the Southeast Asian country's newly mentioned mining sector, suspended operations three months after pouring its first gold on July 20 last year after two cyanide spills.

"It should do the test run for as long as it should take because we want to make sure that this is done properly and in a transparent manner," Reyes said.

"We should make sure that the environment will be protected if the mine operations should resume permanently," he said. —Reuters

BURMA VISIT

Romulo returns empty-handed

FOREIGN SECRETARY ALBERTO ROMULO said yesterday he failed to get any response from Myanmar's junta leaders when he renewed regional demands for the release of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi and a rapid shift to democracy.

Although Myanmar assures its take-encouraging steps, including a decision to invite U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and his special envoy to visit, efforts to end the military-ruled nation to fulfill long-promised democratic reforms should continue, Romulo said.

Romulo met with the junta's top five leaders, including Senior Gen. Than Shwe, during a three-day visit last week to Myanmar. He was the latest in a string of high-level envoys from the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations to visit the country.

In Myanmar's new administrative capital of Naypyidaw, Romulo reminded the leaders of last month's decision by Asean foreign ministers for the release of political detainees, including Nobel laureate Suu Kyi, and town democratic reforms, Romulo said at a news conference yesterday.

Romulo said his appeal was met with silence.

"We stated it, that's the important thing. You know, you cannot force people to make a statement," he said.

According to Romulo, Myanmar's Than Shwe said "an important milestone" would be reached before the end of the year in connection with the country's efforts to draft a Constitution through a National Convention of political and ethnic groups—touted as a first step on its road map to democracy.

Critics have dismissed the National Convention as a sham because Suu Kyi's party is not attending.

"We're doing what we can to tell them to get back to the road map and, in fact, although it's not complete, there is some light at the end of the tunnel," he said. "It's like some lights popping on a rock. In time, the rock starts to chip away."

Romulo said he did not invite Suu Kyi because "it was not in the agenda."

Suu Kyi, 61, has spent nearly 11 of the last 17 years in detention, mostly under house arrest. She was most recently taken into custody in May 2003, after a mob supporting the junta assaulted her motorcade.

Myanmar has become a source of embarrassment to Asean, largely because of the country's dismal human rights record, which has been condemned by Western and European governments. AP

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Gloria, ex-DECS, DOST secretary, dies at 66
By Alexis Pupa

FORMER EDUCATION SECRETARY Ricardo Gloria died on Sunday due to complications from diabetes.

He was 66.

According to his son, Rong Gloria, his father's first call upon arrival to the Philippine Heart Center on May 25 because of problems with his heart.

On June 3, Gloria underwent a coronary bypass surgery. Yesterday, his son said an infection brought about by his diabetes complaint led to his death at around 9:30 a.m.

Gloria's body was brought to the Church Among the Palms inside the University of the Philippines campus in Los Baños, Laguna.

On Wednesday, his body will be brought to United Church of Christ in the Philippines in Dipa, Davao del Sur. He will be buried on Saturday at the Dipa Memorial Hall.

Before working for government, Gloria served as a World Bank consultant in Indonesia.

He served as Education Secretary from 1994 to 1998 during the term of former President Fidel V. Ramos. Before that, he served as Department of Science and Technology (DOST) secretary during the term of former president Corazon Aquino.

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Water interruption in portions of Pateros and Taguig needed to upgrade facilities

Manila Water is currently upgrading its facilities and pipelines to further improve the distribution of water in the East Zone. As part of the program, a large check valve will be installed at the Taguig Booster Pump which will result in a temporary cutoff of water supply in some parts of Pateros and Taguig. The interruption will begin 8:00 p.m., Wednesday, August 16, 2006, up to 4:00 a.m., Thursday, August 17. Affected areas will be: Barangays San Roque, Martires del 96, Agusbo and Sta. Ana, all in Pateros and Barangays Ususan, Tuktukan, Bambang, Wawa, Sta. Ana, Lower Bicutan and Hagonoy, in Taguig.

All residents of the said areas are advised to store enough water prior to the scheduled interruptions to avoid inconvenience.

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We don't just lay pipes, we improve lives.

Fragile peace in Lebanon; war leaves 1,250 dead

Front page A1

summer. Response, technology better commands, tanks, and air strikes deep into Lebanon aimed at killing Hezbollah leaders and cutting off their lines of supply.

It found an opponent vastly better prepared and equipped for a fight.

"Hezbollah have been preparing for exactly this battle for six years," said Israeli counterterrorism expert Boaz Ganor.

Code of silence

During this time, the guerrilla group melded southern Lebanon into an ideal battleground for a guerrilla war.

It complex series of bunkers and tunnels were dug out of the rocky hills and superbly camouflaged.

A vast arsenal of rockets was hidden there right, often in village homes and caves, protected by a code of silence among the local residents who view Hezbollah as the defenders of Lebanon.

Ground forces were sent in to find and destroy the well-hidden rocket launchers.

Like phantoms

In the conversation of the Israelis, they would be hit-and-run again in villages and towns, adversary, as Hezbollah squads appeared like phantoms from hidden bunkers—many stocked with enough food and ammunition to last weeks.

"We look for it, but you don't know where it is coming from," said Eitan Swissa, 20, an Israeli tank gunner.

It's not just by milking classic guerrilla tactics. Hezbollah was also superbly armed—mainly by Iran and Syria—and on a large scale.

Antitank rockets

The one weapon that has proved particularly effective for Hezbollah has been their antitank missiles, from the open-body HPGs truck-propelled grenades and bigger missiles to the advanced Russian-made Sagar and Kornet systems and the Sunburn 800-kg missile.

Hezbollah antitank cells hit dozens of Israeli tanks, including the formidable Merkava tank, and maximizing the damage with an intimate knowledge of the Israeli armor.

However, it has not always been about high-tech arsenals.

Katyusha and booby traps

Israel, the only country in the world with an active antiballistic system on line, was left helpless as Hezbollah fired thousands of World War II-era Katyusha rockets into Israel.

And Israel countered an array of Hezbollah booby traps, lined with primitive pack, electronic sensors and remote control detonators, with bulldozers.

Yet despite the blows they have taken, most military analysts give the Israeli Army high marks for its performance.

Technical superiority

The Israeli Army has used its technical superiority to good effect. Unmanned drones have given the battlefields, giving commanders back in Israel real-time information.

Israel's vaunted Air Force, with its F-16 and F-15 warplanes, have pounded targets, dropping Lasser-guided smart bombs on Hezbollah command bunkers and media-transporting automobiles in Beirut.

The Israeli troops operated mostly at night, using their superior night-vision equipment to outmaneuver Hezbollah's adversaries.

As the ceasefire took hold, exhausted Lebanese refugees returned from their shelters to stock up on provisions and inspect ruined homes.

Women in northern Israel that have borne the brunt of rocket attacks remained deserted.

The five-week war displaced about a million people and laid waste to swathes of Lebanon.

Israel said some soldiers began pulling out of Lebanese but that it would see till its air and sea blockade until a mechanism was in place to stop arms smuggling.

Thousands of Lebanese displaced by the war headed south after the truce—some to check damage to their homes, others hoping to return home for good. Drivers honked their horns, and hundreds of cars jammed a narrow road leading south from Sidon.

Deadly last minutes

Around 1,116 people in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 156 Israelis, including 116 soldiers, have been killed in the war, triggered when Hezbollah raptured two Israeli soldiers in a cross-border raid on July 12.

Minutes before the truce began, an Israeli air strike on a van on the outskirts of the southern city of Bazdbek killed seven people. The van was transporting policemen, soldiers and civilians.

Air strikes on a village near Lebanon's eastern border with Syria killed at least nine civilians, media said.

Under a UN Security Council resolution, Israeli forces must start to withdraw in around 15,000 foreign peacekeeping troops and 15,000 Lebanese soldiers arrive in the south. Hezbollah must also pull its fighters out of southern Lebanon.

Hezbollah has said it accepts the UN resolution but has not said whether it will pull out its forces from the area south of the Litani river.

Israeli officials said the Jewish state believed it would be entitled to use force to prevent Hezbollah from rearming and from gaining positions of influence in southern Lebanon even after the truce took effect.

Western diplomats said they feared Israel's broad definition of "defensive" actions could lead to a resurgence in the violence, bringing unforeseen such deployment of the UN troops, likely to be led by France.

The United Nations has said it could be around a week before the international force can be deployed. Slovenia, Indonesia, Italy, Turkey, Spain and Malaysia have agreed to send troops to bolster the UN force.

Shephaan chopped bodies were Beirut housing Hezbollah and its bosses and Syrian "home turf" for the devastation and warning it would respond to any future attack.

"Can you pay this price a second time?" said one leaflet.

Hezbollah activists handed out their own posters, claiming "divine victory."

Joyous Lebanese

With Hezbollah vowing to fight until the last Israeli soldier leaves Lebanon and Israel swearing it will respond to any attack on its troops or rocket fire, it was unclear whether the ceasefire would hold.

The mood among the convoys of Lebanese heading south back to their homes was joyful.

Some said they were going to check on their homes and then go back to the safety of the north while others said they were returning for good.

Many cars were honking their horns, their occupants giving the V-for-victory sign.

"Thank you, beyond reason Hezbollah," she added in reference to the Hezbollah chief. AP, Reuters, AFP

P500-M repatriation ...

Front page A1

were not paying their salaries.

Bogue told the budget hearing that the late 800 Filipino evacuees were transferred Sunday night from the Church of the Marvelous Medal in Beirut to Damascus in Syria, and would be arriving in two flights in Manila today.

Evacuation center empty

"So you have an evacuation center that is practically empty now?" Sen. Sergio Osmeña III asked.

"That's correct, Your Honor," Bogue replied.

But Bogue said embassy officials were now reconsidering the evacuation efforts.

Asked by Sen. Franklin Drilon, finance committee chair, how many more Filipinos they requested to evacuate and how much money was needed for that, Bogue said it is "premature" to whether the ceasefire would hold.

"Also our embassy officers are taking time now to go home to home to take their custody, especially the problematic household service workers to have to Lebanon," he said.

Bogue said that aside from the 800 Filipinos expected home today, 4,000 had been repatriated to the Philippines.

Owwa spending

He said the Owwa had spent P142 million for their repatriation and would need more than P100 million more.

He said the money came from the P500-million repatriation fund from the Owwa, approved by its board upon the request of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The P500 million that Malacañang is asking for Congress' approval is separate from the Owwa allocation and would come from the treasury, Bogue explained.

By a 169-4 vote, the lower House last night passed the repatriation fund measure, which now goes to the Senate for its action.

"We delivered this bill so we can start our work," Speaker Jose de Venecia said.

Senators grilled the officials on whether they knew exactly how many Filipinos were in danger and should be repatriated.

"How many kinds there are in danger, are we talking of danger due to panalamatan of their economy because of the war? How many? Do we have this figure? We are discussing money here to appropriate and we do not have a basis for making a decision," Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said.

No more than 60 percent

Imelda said the Department of Foreign Affairs was the lead agency in charge of the evacuation and repatriation efforts.

Imelda said the OFWs are working on 20,000 of the 30,000 Filipinos believed to be in Lebanon. So far, 24,000 of them were documented.

"Our experience in the past is we've never gone beyond 60 percent for the total number of Filipinos in a certain country in our repatriation efforts," he said.

"What is our estimate of the stability of that ceasefire? My God, gentleman, please. You came here you must be prepared to answer questions, it can't be like this," Imelda said.

Osmeña noted that most of the Filipino workers did not want to leave Lebanon despite the danger they were facing in the war zone.

"They have jobs and want to leave only when their lives are already in danger because there are no jobs to be had at home," he said.

Andaya said the government was expecting more evacuees.

"You never know how long the ceasefire will last. We agree to estimate that we have the funds for [the repatriation] if the need arises," Andaya told reporters during a break in the hearing.

Money for other calamities

Andaya said the government was sticking to the President's policy of reserving all the P1 billion in Lebanon, and his policy remained despite the ceasefire. That, he said, Malacañang still wanted to have P500 million for the repatriation.

"Admittedly, on the Owwa side, there are only few evacuees. But our position is for us not to run out of bullets in the middle of the road," he said.

He said the money was still needed for other calamities, including the needs of the Albay residents displaced by Mt. Mayon's eruption.

"This is not exactly needed [just for Lebanon]. This is calamity fund. If there will be an excess amount, we have two volcanoes [the volcano victims] are on our thin hand. But we are specifically asking this for the repatriation of our OFWs," Andaya said.

Who gets credit?

Sen. Juliet Arroyo noted that the President would get the credit for the repatriation fund.

"We (in Congress) appropriate and the President is the hero," he said.

"That's how the system works," Andaya replied.

As in the first budget hearing, Ms Arroyo's Cabinet members in full force yesterday despite Malacañang's earlier policy to mark previous Senate hearings. With a report from Michael Lim Ubac

AGOJO

In wars, quest for media balance also a battlefield

Front page A1

Jeffers at the Council on Foreign Relations, whose eight-year tenure at CNN included a stint as Baghdad bureau chief.

Editorial and executive journalists (they are very sometimes of keeping a tough balance over time, whether that is a 24-hour cable news cycle or a week's worth of evening broadcasts and newspapers.

And they pay special attention to images because of their potency.

"Photos are trickier than words because their content is in large measure emotional, visceral, and because you react with their soul, not with your brain before you react with your brain," said Esther Schrader, editor of the New York Times. "You can't learn a 'to be sure' paragraph in a photo."

According to Keller, his newspaper bases its photography choices on an array of factors, including a picture's quality, originality and relevance.

"You don't say, 'Yesterday we [named dead Lebanese bystanders], so today we have to have dead Israeli innocents," he said. "But you also over time to portray the full range of the war's consequences."

That goal is ever more challenging when dealing with still photographs, which better than any other medium convey the ebullience and meaning of hostile situations, according to David Friend, editor of creative development for Time Inc and a former director of photography for Life magazine.

Not about taking sides

In an article titled "Unintended Target" in last week's issue of Time, the newsmagazine offered readers two photos next to each other.

On the left-hand page, a crying girl clings to her mother in an Israeli emergency room, both of them injured by a Hezbollah rocket.

On the right-hand page, amid a scene of body fragments on Israeli attack on a building in Qana, a dead boy can be glimpsed through a plastic shroud.

Richard Stengel, Time's managing editor, said that while concerns about fairness exist, readers see his judgment that was not the prime factor in this case.

"Even though the pictures are side by side, there's a kind of aesthetic balance, not necessarily an ideological one," Stengel said. "It's not about taking sides, but about the terrible poignancy by people on both sides."

Complex issue

Jon Steiner, executive producer of "World News With Charles Gibson" on ABC, said he could not think of a more event in recent memory more difficult to cover, given the complexity of the issues and powerful nature of the images.

Executives at news organizations, long reviled by complaints about their Middle East coverage from various sides, said they had tried to avoid pandering to critics.

"They don't want you to be balanced in your coverage," said Editor of The Times. "They want you to portray the morality of the war as they see it."

Added Bureau of ABC News: "Our job is not to decide outsiders or not one side deserves more or less. Our job is to report the news."

New York Times News Service

dti
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY

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This notice is in cooperation with the
Philippine Wood Producers Association.

GMA wants clean 'super projects'

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO WANTS all "super projects" that will be implemented in the super regions to withstand tough legal scrutiny to prevent them from going the way of the Arroyo-Romulo project and the Clark-Subic International Airport Terminal 3 (Naia 3) which are still mired in legal quagmires.

To ensure their smooth implementation and completion, the President has ordered key government agencies involved in the projects to beef up their legal teams by hiring good lawyers who could defend the projects from legal challenges.

"The President's order is clear—either you beef up your own legal team or if you can't just surrender your plantilla item and let the DOJ [Department of Justice] or OGCC [Office of Government Corporate Counsel] handle it," said Arthur Yap, chief of the Presidential Management Staff and the President's point man for Metro Luzon, one of the five super regions.

The government expects to spend roughly P2773 billion over the next four years to build railways (P1,080 billion), roads (P96 billion), airports (P62 billion), seaports (P36 billion) and irrigation projects (P12.6 billion) as catalyst projects for the super region anyway.

"Some line agencies think that the DOJ or OGCC is their lawyers but the reason why they have their own budget items for legal services is for them to get good lawyers on their team," said Yap.

Yap, who was formerly head of the Department of Agriculture and National Food Administration, said that to make sure that unsolicited proposal law would not be misused by legal challenges, "I also ask the opinion of the DOJ or OGCC aside from getting the views of my team."

Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said the biggest hurdle in attracting capital into the super projects was the government's past track record in joint ventures with the private sector through the build-operate-and-transfer schemes.

"The legal obstacles are the biggest problem in most of our projects that's why you have the Public Estates Authority Amendment," said Neri, who noted that the deal got snagged only because the government did not sell the reclaimed property to a state corporation or a local government unit to enable it put the removed material of selling it directly to the private sector.

"That's why the Supreme Court voided it because of legal considerations."

Neri said this was the reason why Cabinet members should strengthen their legal staff so that all projects would be legally backed up.

"From the very beginning, we should study all legal issues because Philippine laws are so complex, they are numerous and full of pitfalls. This is why we got into legal troubles and our projects get delayed by congressional investigations. There will always be enough people around just to bring down any project," Neri said.

Another problem discouraging capital investors is the government was the slow processing of papers which the President hoped to address by forming an anti-Red Tape task force.

Private firms back clearinghouse for vehicle insurance

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE COMPANY'S TOP INSURANCE INQUIRERS have endorsed the proposal to set up a clearinghouse for all Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) insurance of private vehicles.

Winston Garcia, president of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), told the House committee on transportation in a recent hearing that 24 private insurance companies have already expressed interest in the proposed scheme.

Garcia said lawmakers the scheme would boost the revenue of private insurers since it would promote the proliferation of fake CTPLs.

He said the CTPL model, particularly the one endorsed by the GSIS, would also provide better public accountability for insurance companies and better protection for car owners.

Aside from simplifying the process of filing claims for vehicular accidents, the proposed scheme would also allow the Philippine Insurers and Reinsurers Association (Pira) to safely issue CTPL for private vehicles.

The Pira proposed the creation of a clearing house where all Certificates of Cover would be validated and payment of premiums made through banks before one could register a vehicle.

A CTPL insures bodily injury or death resulting from vehicle accident for up to P50,000 per person/per car owner required to get a CTPL before being issued a certificate of registration.

The GSIS has offered to cover all the CTPL insurance of private vehicles.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, August 15, 2006
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
1st Reading: Rev 11:19b, 12:1-6, 10
2nd Reading: 1 Cor 15:20-27
Gospel: Luke 1:39-56

Mary then set out in those to the hills of Judah. She entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leapt in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit, and giving a loud cry, said: "You are most blessed among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb! How is it that the mother of my Lord comes to me? The moment your greeting sounded in my ears, the baby within me suddenly leapt for joy. Blessed are you who believed that the Lord's word would come true!"

And Mary said:
"My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my savior!
He has looked upon his servant in her low estate,
and people forever will call me blessed.
The Mighty One has done great things for me,
Holy is his Name!
From age to age his mercy extends
to those who live in his presence.
He has acted with power and done wonders,
and scattered the proud with their plans.
He has put down the mighty from their thrones
and lifted up those who are downtrodden.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He held out his hand to Israel, his servant,
for he remembered his mercy,
even as he promised our fathers,
Abraham and his descendants forever."

Mary remained with Elizabeth about three months and then returned home.

Commentary:

On this day we single out one of Mary carrying Jesus, the Word of God made flesh present in Christ Incarnate (Jn 1). As will depict the mother and raise the lowly [without violence]. As will humiliate who are hungry and send the rich away empty. These are the mighty deeds of God upon the earth. This is the child, the shepherd of the nations. This is true salvation news.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Editorial

Meaning of success

TAIPAN JOHN GOKONGWEI JR. DID A WARREN Buffett on his 80th birth anniversary last Friday, donating P10.25 billions to education and other causes.

In an interview, Gokongwei, who has certainly been a huge success in his public and private life, quoted Ralph Waldo Emerson in describing success: "... to leave the world a little better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is the meaning of success."

Gokongwei wants to leave the world a little better by giving a big part of his wealth to education, for obviously he believes that education plays an important role in changing the social and economic conditions of the people. A Chinese-Filipino, he believes in the truth of the Chinese saying that "If you give a man a fish, he will eat for one day; if you teach him to fish, he will eat for life."

Rich men have always been attracted to philanthropy; it's their way of giving back to the people a part of the wealth that they amassed during their lives. In the United States, the fortunes of industrialists and entrepreneurs like Andrew Carnegie, John D. Rockefeller Sr., Henry Ford, J. Paul Getty and W.K. Kellogg have endowed some of the world's richest foundations.

Bill Gates, the richest man in the world with a net worth of $50 billion, has established the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation which is devoting its funds and efforts to such causes as education and fighting diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria in developing countries. It rose to the Gates Foundation that Buffett recently donated $37 billion of his $44 billion fortune.

In the Philippines, we have many rich and super-rich people. According to Forbes magazine, seven Filipinos rank among the 40 richest people in Southeast Asia: Lucio Tan, 12th; Henry Sy, 14th; Jaime Zobel de Ayala, 20th; Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., 21st; George Ty, 23rd; Gokongwei, 35th; and Tony Tan Caktiong, 37th. Rather says three of these rank among the 500 richest in the world: Henry Sy and family, 353rd; Tan, 387th; and Zobel de Ayala and family, 437th.

We are not lacking in rich and super-rich people who could do a Buffett or a Gokongwei. If they have not yet done so, we hope that they will recognize the terrible economic disparity between the rich and the poor in the Philippines. It has often been said that in our country 10 percent of the population controls 90 percent of the national revenue. These figures are even worse than those stated in the Pareto Principle.

Vilfredo Pareto, an Italian economist who studied the distribution of wealth in several countries in the 1800s, discovered a curious phenomenon. His study disclosed that "about 80 percent of the wealth in most countries was controlled by a minority minority—about 20 percent of the people." Pareto called this observation, "predictable imbalance," and it later became known as the Pareto Principle or the 80:20 rule.

In the Philippines, the ratio is something like 90:10, indicating the depth of poverty in which the greater mass of the people is hopelessly mired. Hopelessly? Yes, except that social, political and economic changes can occur; people could be given a better education. And here is where the rich can help. Gokongwei has shown the way and we hope that others in the economic elite will pitch in and donate substantial sums for the improvement of education in our country.

A P5-million donation can build about three *new* classrooms—probably even five, as some private organizations have found out. The same amount can pay for the annual salaries of about eight teachers. Or it can buy thousands of textbooks and other teaching materials that are perennially in short supply. Or it can be used for the further training and education of teachers.

The super-rich donors could explore the possibility of forming a foundation similar to the Gates Foundation that would be devoted solely to the improvement of Philippine education. A concerted, coordinated effort with substantial resources will help reverse the deterioration of the Philippine educational system. Ultimately, this will redound to the benefit of the national economy in general and of business and industry in particular.

To the prospective donors we reiterate the words of Martin Luther King Jr.: "Philanthropy is commendable, but it must not excuse the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustices which make philanthropy necessary."

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Memory of the heart

VIEWPOINT

Jose L. Mercado

SOME PEOPLE KNOW INTIMATELY JOHN Gokongwei Jr., the tycoon who gave away P10.25 billion to charity last Friday. I don't. Our paths crossed exactly one time in half a half century.

The half-hour came in February 1971. University of San Carlos-sired eight alumni led by "JG" (he couldn't make the cliche due to a crammed schedule. But the PSG-sniffant group he gave to USC this week should make up for that). I was among the eight. But assignments kept us in Bangkok.

Bit part, years later, one I took. On his invitation, I flew in from Bangkok, my United Nations station. He was thinking what would be a costly guided missiles. Publishing the Manila Times. Should I join? he asked.

There were stints in American universities then. Still in the queue were the younger lots at Thailand's International High School. To study their US education benefits. For a second cinch or journalism, zero prohibitive. There were competent editors here, I said on declining.

Since then, I've been content to be that orphan who peddled goods from an old bicycle (a brand) into 3 Cities, to lead the 396 billion Ali Summit Holdings. His agencies made sense and good sense.

Inevitably, a flood of consumer and computerese still follows Philstar hope has a patch by trade around here. Other lessons will endorse JG's decision. When good-looking pocketful of pieces of coin can't spend a little machines," Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. told Australian businessmen who thanked him for donations. Sydney Morning Herald's outing reporters Max Pennell wrote.

Gratitude a memory of the heart. And the values that underpin the gift may ultimately be the more significant—and hundredth—given more in the Constitution: "The use of property bears a social function." Goods of this world, whether cash, food, water, even talents and time, are meant for all. The socialist's right to a mess ends where the right of a dozen mothers to milk for her weaned baby begins.

The model may also focus on how, away from the spotlight, ordinary citizens quietly share and fix the needy. Icons OFW. Iron-skilled Construction workers. They document the burgeoning philanthropy from Filipinos abroad. The lottery fans. Oscar Lanhenan creditably symbolized the best of generosity born out of the ordinary and the limited.

Today's news cites two examples from middle-class professionals, some tension worshipper John Carroll. SJ. Lucio Tan, the Binhiones and Barandos, Villars, etc. are wanted, not in hard, but poorer, seasons and means). "They are no more anxious to shake up the system than the denizens of the 1960s."

Technology has freed these "pecuniary decency" reminds one of Charles Horney. The generosity of the self-effacing 70-year-old widow Alexa Instruments, in *The New York Times*' Maureen Dowd reports, are just that—Puritan. Known philanthropies. At last count, he had given away more than P13 billion to hospitals, universities and, in Pope John Paul II's words, "the wounded."

Putnam's charity runs casual," Dowd writes. "He, he takes the subway, flies economy, drops for his own groceries. Putnam doesn't own a house in the Hamptons. Putnam doesn't own a Picasso. Putnam doesn't remember Jean-Pierre Rouffe and Jean Raffarin's "Rules (2 colleagues?)

Dowd quotes Putnam's reasoning. "If you only wear one pair of shoes at a time," Dowd adds. "He acts on the idea that the real pursuit of more of the stuff is silly. People need only what they need."

Bare-plate applies not. As we haven't heard the list of Gokongwei's gift. And so well. For "we realize a living by what we get," Winston Churchill once wrote. "But we make a life by what we give away."

Logic 101

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA says the computerization of election canvassing will make the count easy and clean in the 2007 election. Easy and cleaner. It won't eliminate cheating entirely he said, but "I'm sure it will be minimized." The integrity of the election will be recognized." Dowd of this and, he said, Malacañang is aggressively pushing for the use of Mega Pacific's counting machines. "We wish those things could be used because it is one of the wishes of the President."

What is wrong with this statement? Two things.

One is, why on earth would anyone, much less the presumptive president, even think of using the machines and/or services of Mega Pacific? If it hadn't been for Mega Pacific, where was using bid rate rigging, the

A very political issue

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

* * *

[illegible] FORMER FOREIGN SECRETARY [illegible] visited my husband and me at his penthouse at 11th anniversary celebration of the Philippine-China Advisory Council (Asia) Inc. he chairs, which also held last month in Cebu City. I wondered if it would be interesting to a journalist who has written political stories in this country for nearly 20 years to hear the "inside stories" of Ople, and I was right on. Some of the "inside stories" of Ople, told in a "strong and open multisectoral trading mission, open opportunity, free and open trade and investment, and trade facilitation," might not be at issue today in political debates in the country. For example, the "Philippine-China trading in the Areas of Negotiations, or the relevance of the Senate, the passage of the 2007 budget, etc.

But I'm glad I accepted the invitation of Senator Alfredo Lim to the opening ceremony of Asia in 1996, when the Philippines, then under President Fidel V. Ramos, hosted the third Asia Summit at the Subic Bay Freeport. For not only did I nearly faint from the blinding anniversary celebrations at Malacañang (though it is fitted. It must become clear that Ople, Mon and Bonne such as the "impending demise" of the World Trade Organization (WTO), free trade agreements (FTAs) and "blanket re-traditional arrangements" are not just theoretical concepts, they have become highly political issues we among us must, as evidenced by the fierce and hot debates among the members, especially on the second day.

* * *

The 11th anniversary of Abar was an occasion for its members to convene on the mid-term mode, taking an hour later than fixed via-a-vis the "Bogor Goals," which were first proposed to the organization's members in Asia-Pacific leaders in Seattle in 1993, led by US President Bill Clinton, and completed and approved in the second summit in Bogor, Indonesia. A significant contribution was done while the Bogor Goals remain valid, the trade and investment policy landscape has changed considerably in the past 10 years, and more important developments are fast emerging up, such as the trade/sole cooperation of the ASEAN+3 and not just the official government-to-government [illegible] to follow WTO.

One of the special features of the Cebu is the agronomy areas, of which the Philippines is one, are obligated to report periodically before a committee of 21 experts from around the world on the steps they have taken to [illegible] purpose, most by provisions, specifically in respecting, promoting and protecting the human rights of women. This is what the Philippines is doing is how well, and where [illegible] the "shadow report" of women's NGOs must be submitted to the delegates and presented in [illegible] session this year, the presentation of shadow reports—which often contain information counter-balancing the government reports—is expected to [illegible] more effectively—has been made part of the main proceedings.

The reporting process is necessary to which governments are held accountable by the international community, as well as constructive to the international solidarity. And while the Cedaw committee has no "police powers," it is supposed to attain "concluding observations" at the end of each reporting session. The observations [illegible] constitute recommendations to the state party, which means on how to improve their compliance with Cedaw provisions, as well as comments on existing laws inconsistent in each country.

Will the Philippine government—or at least the [illegible] administration—receive a favorable assessment from the Cedaw committee? Or will it be "shamed" into admitting that under a woman President, women in the Philippines are worse off than ever before?

* * *

[illegible] Senator Lim's [illegible] Senate [illegible] Senate [illegible] Senate

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US' only 'guilt' in Lebanon

THE INQUIRER EDITORIAL OF AUG. 2 asked a chorus of anti-historical detractors who bolster the United States to guilty of "letting" Israel decide when enough is enough in its ongoing war of blitzkrieg extirpation in southern Lebanon.

Like their Palestinian, Iranian, Syrian and Iraqi counterparts, Hezbollah is a radical Muslim group which believes that the Jewish state needs to disappear from the face of the earth.

Mindful of America's illogical world view ever since we thrilled to assured up of European Jews coming March 1941 II, no US president after Franklin Delano Roosevelt, including George W. Bush, will ever again dare cast a blind eye to threats directed to Jewish extermination.

Only the time the Israelis are by their action supremely capable of "taking care of business" militarily, with a mind to and from their chief benefactors—the US government and America's powerful Jewish community, not to mention the rest of the civilized world, including the Philippines, as far as I know.

In my opinion, the only real game possible to this crisis is the permanent reestablishment of Israel's territorial integrity and of the right of the Jews as a people to exist as a state and to live normal lives in peace.

If the United States is "guilty" of anything, it is in pussyfooting—it not being vocal enough—in its support of Israel's other rights to equal its overwhelming (3:5 ayin) preemptive form the genocidal threats of extremists who want the entire Middle East to disintegrate.

—ELLIOTT JOHNSON,
99 Bay 2749 Olaine City

FVR not in elites' secret dialogues

HE WRITE IN CONNECTION WITH THE Aug. 7 column, titled "Elites bid to oust Mrs. Arroyo's line in secret dialogues," of Amando Doronila, to remind to a "secret meeting" held at the Fortune Magazine Center last July 30-31, which "followed closely a secret think tank discussion initiated by former President Fidel V. Ramos."

As stated, Doronila's column was quite interesting, morever, with so much details such as... the format of the meeting, the names of the facilitator as well as the 50 or so participants, what was said to some...the fate of the tuna farming, etc. Indeed, a recipient of this manner of information in a "secret" review.

But please allow us to correct what must have been a wrong information received by the columnist. Former President Ramos did not initiate or participate in the "secret" workshop or in any other think tank discussion.

FVR received a letter invitation from Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (delivered to him by former agrarian reform secretary, and now ARC president, Ernesto Garilao, together with a book by Adam Schaaf, titled "Solving Tough Problems").

On the same letter, FVR wrote his reply:

"(1) Thank you for your kind invitation. Regretfully, I shall not be able to participate in other commitments previously added. And, same time frame. (somehow just FVR my article for 28 July (Sun) to the Sunday Bulletin." (The article referred to was about the current Israeli-Hezbollah conflict.)

"(2) I especially appreciate Adam's book. Fabulous!"

The reply was sent by fax to Archbishop Lagdameo on July 27; a copy was also given to former Secretary Garilao, to fax. FVR's "involvement" did not go beyond his handwritten note, declining the invitation in the so-called "secret" dialogue.

—RUE LAUZON,
FVR spokesman,
26, 9 Expenditure Plaza,
US Fujo ave. Chino Roces Avenue,
Makati City 1200

Unmask losing GOCC

I FIND THE SOL 8 COLUMN OF CONRADO Banal III interesting but at the same time alarming. It would have been more interesting if Banal divulged the identity of the GOCC (government-owned and -controlled corporation) they're around the alarming amount if Presidents Macapagal-Arroyo and the concerned lawmaking officials are aware of how this GOCC is being managed and yet don't do anything about it.

According to Banal, one of the highly compensated executives of this "losing" company is very close to someone in the Palace. It is not really difficult to imagine how a company, which earned over P1 billion last year, could register losses of over P3 billion. The expose of Banal—the inherently his pay checks and entitlement expense allowances that clean more than two months monthly on top of expensive cars that consume a lot of gasoline—calls for a big-time investigation.

The public, especially the taxpayers, should start to worry if this GOCC is being controlled by the government because here would be a classic case of corruption in the government. I also start to wonder what the projects of this GOCC are and how beneficial these projects are to the public.

Can Congress please look into this?

—EDUARDO VICTORIA LALLA,
34 Onanda St., Eastwood Subd.,
Bellmar, Quezon City

Super visions

THE VISION OF "SUPER REGION" TO INSTANTLY quite titillating, even thought-provoking, it calls to mind the past, especially among those born in 1929-2006 age 70+ who became a voter in 1949.

After the Ilocos-Quezon treasure paradise in 1946, his vision for our country was total economic institutions, devised for his critics as "economic nonsensicals." Nothing sanks one of his grand vision.

In 1953, Ramon Magsaysay was elected president. Not unlike, he claimed had a charisma to, and was hailed as the "guy" who stopped the communists in their tracks. But Magsaysay, together with his cronies for our society perished in a plane crash in Cebu.

He was succeeded by Carlos Garcia who espoused the "Filipino first policy." But it sadly tainted one that his policy was only for a few cronies and, a few Filipino businessmen who maneuvered that they should be the first to benefit from the Filipino first policy, leaving the rest of the Filipinos, especially the masses, to wallow in misery—as usual.

Came Ferdinand Macapagal, with his moral regeneration program. He claimed, we became a nation of smugglers. Instead of moral regeneration, it was moral degeneration, his vision denied.

Came another brilliant Filipino leader, a lawyer who has the hands cry "This nation can be great again." Ferdinand Marcos thwarted Macapagal, and was elected president in 1965.

Did our nation become great again? Ask those whose businesses were gobbled up by the predatory cronies of Marcos.

After the Marcos era, came three consecutive national programs: community development, rural development, human influence, total economic development (replayed circa 2004).

From 1946 to 2006, or over half-a-century period, we still take the same talk: rural development, local economic decentralization.

Remind: in the 1960s, our country was second only to Japan in terms of growth and development. Now, we are the sick man of Asia. Now, we rank second only to Bangladesh, as the former.

And to this Saviour, the third region is still depressed and disadvantaged as ever, second only to the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which is at the bottom of the totem pole of development.

Penile-size who ever drew universal "vision" go pull and save our nothing but spinning wings or farting, can see Islamic or southern me now it's, the many of us, no longer have faith in the so-called "super visions"? Especially because we do not have the wherewithal to fund the projects or because our public debt now rest is trillion?

The more crucial question is: Who will benefit the most from the projects? The masses, as we dubbed by the elite or the downtrodden, or the elite themselves, also known as the present-day illustrados, compradors and accumulators?

—EDMUNDO B. ESCALANTE,
past president,
Integrated bar of the Philippines,
Surrogate Chapter

A Rotarian should be man enough to face truth

ROTARIAN JIMMY TURPO COMMENT than Jocelyn Tan Jan? Reliance hasn't failed the farmer's. Ang Tibay (FIX, 7/30/06), to indeed unfortunate because I believe it does not reflect the true sentiment of the Rotarians in the Philippines who think Reliance should be man enough to come forward and tell the whole truth.

Because Reliance has not been truthful, he has been unfair to the thousands of farmers who depend on their land for livelihood, and is been properly used, the fertilizer land could have been beneficial not only to the farmers' families but to the country as well. And certainly to not telling the truth, Reliance has created a lot of ill will, not goodwill, among his countrymen—particularly among thousands of farmers' children whose daily subsistence depends on their parents' harvest.

—ANGELITO SANTOS,
jobsi@yahoo.com

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ECC issued in 2000 for Poro operations

By Yolanda Sarmiento-Puertos
Regional Head Sierra Luzon

SAN FERNANDO CITY—A water operator at the Poro Point port showed a copy of an environmental clearance certificate that it said covered its operations contrary to charges that it was operating without an ECC.

The Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PIPC) presented the ECC, issued in May 2000 by then Environment Secretary Antonio Cerilles, as the DENR regional office denied it had a hidden agenda in clearing shoals in the port operations.

"We have no ulterior motive, no hidden agenda," said Victor Alcantara, regional executive director of the Bicol office of the DENR.

The DENR's Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) issued a cease and desist order to stop the port operations on Aug. 4.

Joel Salvador, Environment Management Bureau director, challenged the PIEC to expose the "hidden agenda" of the DENR in issuing the CDO.

Eufemio Rocco Sr., Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson was tagged as the broker in the takeover, an accusation that he denied. Singson was instrumental in the rise to power of President Macapagal-Arroyo in 2001.

"Our operation is purely environmental," said Salvador.

"We are not stopping them from getting the ECC that will guide them in how to mitigate environmental problems," Salvador said.

Double jeopardy

But the PIPC, in a statement, said its operations are covered by the ECC that was issued in 2000 by the DENR to the BCDA for the entire Poro Point.

The statement quoted lawyer Brigido Dulay, the PIPC legal counsel, as saying the PIPC "is a joint venture partner of BCDA and therefore did not require an ECC separate from that which was already given to the Poro Point Development zone."

"Only locators within the zone are required to obtain separate ECCs," the statement said.

San Fernando Mayor Mary Jane Ortega said she asked Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes to act on the takeover of the PIPC, but denied she was "scapegoating" with Singson as the governor could control the port.

In a previous statement, Singson said the port was being managed by retained his cronies headed the BCDA but denied he exerted influence on the agency to harass the DENR.

"I don't know of his (Singson's) hidden agenda," said Mayor Ortega. "He said I will run whatever do. There is such a thing as 'look for enemy.'"

Influential person

Earlier, Dulay disclosed that BCDA, legal counsel Atty. Cantemeo had forwarded that a "very influential person" had pressured him to reverse a legal study saying there was no legal basis to terminate the BCDA contract with the PIPC.

PIPC president Emmanuel Morales Jr., in the PIPC statement, appealed to the BCDA and the Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC) to keep the legal conflict within the confines of the BCDA group.

"It is unfair for agencies like the DENR to file charges before them like this especially since it was their personnel which had to be in the frontline of the takeover operations," Morales said.

The PIPC pulled out its personnel from the Poro Point seaport and bulk terminal in San Fernando, La Union after a court issued a 17-day temporary restraining order.

"I urge BCDA and PPMC officials to follow the PIPC example and start respecting the orders by of the court," Morales said.

BCDA is asking the nullification of the 22-year PIPC contract for the management of the port but has been stopped by a court order.

Miriam seeks probe of 'illegal, immoral' takeover of Poro port

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

SEN. MIRIAM DEFENsor-Santiago yesterday filed a resolution asking the Senate to investigate the government's takeover of port operations at Poro Point in La Union.

The administration senator said the takeover was "apparently irregular, illegal and immoral" and reflects a police state.

Santiago, in her resolution, said she wants the Senate committee on environment to investigate the "abusive behavior" of the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Coast Guard and Philippine National Police personnel assigned in La Union.

She made no mention of the administration the forcible takeover seen as the behest of Ilocos Sur boss Luis "Chavit" Singson, who helped depose President Joseph Estrada and install President Macapagal-Arroyo in power.

Earlier reports said it was Singson who pushed for the government takeover. He denied the allegation.

Santiago said the takeover of the private operations of the Poro Point Industrial Corporation (PPIC) and Bulk Handlers Inc. was suspicious because it was in defiance of the temporary restraining order issued by a regional trial court in San Fernando, La Union.

But she said the Philippine Ports Authority, "it is highly questionable and suspicious maneuver" caused a PPA-San Fernando Port Services to manage the seaport a day after the DENR "usurped done on the sea port" and ordered a cease-and-desist order allegedly due to lack of environmental compliance certificate.

She noted media reports that the "suspicious environmental and ecology were served by armed personnel and agents who forced their way into the seaport, resulting in serious bodily violence and physical injuries."

"... [T]he incidences of violence and apparent brutal flouting of the rule of law is indicative of a police state or a military state, without any explanation of the legal basis for such usurpation of illegal and immoral means," Santiago said in her resolution.

Lawyer Brigido Dulay, legal counsel of the PPIC, said in a statement that the "hastiness of the seizure of the CDO makes it highly suspect and evidently was done without due process."

The statement quoted Dulay as questioning the timing of the CDO, saying it came shortly after the San Fernando City Regional Trial Court issued an injunction against BCDA and PPMC stopping the takeover bid.

"This seems to indicate that the DENR move was just part of the whole takeover plot and may have been meant to circumvent the court order," Dulay was quoted as saying.

"We have been operating the port for so long. Why is it only now that DENR wants us to stop what we are doing?" he said.

The DENR regional office in Ilocos Sur denied it had a hidden agenda in issuing a cease-and-desist order against the operations of the PPIC in the Poro Point port.

In the statement, Dulay said the PPIC has "religiously observed the principles and procedures of sound environmental management."

He said the PPIC has installed a waste treatment facility for wastes at the pier. The waste deposited in the facility, he said, is regularly collected by the Barangay Poro Garbage Disposal Unit and disposed of at the city's sanitary landfill.

Dulay also quoted Rio Esteban, an officer of the Environmental Management Bureau, as saying the PPIC needed no separate ECC since the port had been operating since 1982 when an ECC was not required for port operations.

SHOWS of a police state, according to Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, appear at the gates of the Poro Point Industrial Corp. as government agents barricade it during a takeover bid.

Kin of OFW stabbed dead in Israel appeal for justice

LADAD CITY—THE FAMILY of an overseas Filipino worker, who was stabbed dead in Israel on Aug. 4, has asked the government to press charges against the suspect in the killing, her employer's son.

The family of Nilda Dasco is also seeking the release of her remaining salary and other benefits amounting to $5,167 from her employer.

Dasco's sealed remains arrived at the Lanag International Airport on Sunday night after being flown from Israel on Saturday. She was immediately taken home to Barangay Mandaluyan in Bingao town.

Her husband, Pio, said he was counting on the government to bring justice to his wife.

"I could not even raise my own fare to transport the body of my wife from Manila to Ilocos," Pio said, adding that his wife never took a vacation because she wanted to save her money.

Bingao Mayor Isabel Castro helped shoulder the expenses for the air transport from Manila to Lanag.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration in Lanag said the Philippine Embassy in Israel had reported that the son of Dasco's employer had been arrested and jailed.

An embassy report said that Dasco tried to break a fight between her employer and his son—the employer's son "by accosting the mother out of the house.

But this enraged the son, who is reportedly suffering from a mental illness, and who stabbed Dasco several times.

Cresta officer Leonardo Dadis said there was still no word from the embassy whether it had worked out the release of Dasco's benefits from her employer.

"We haven't stopped calling and sending faxes just to speed up the claims due to the events," Dadis said.

Dasco had been serving as a maid in Israel for six years. She was said to have stayed with her employer's family for two years. Cristina Arnaiz, Inquirer Northern Luzon

8 Army soldiers die in highway collision

AKBA, BAMBA—EIGHT Army soldiers died on Sunday night without firing a shot in the rebel-influenced Isabela.

They were returning from combat operations against communist rebels to their Army camp in Gamu town when their truck was rammed by a Bambo-based bus on the national highway here.

Twenty others were hurt. The soldiers were on a two-truck convoy when one of the vehicles was rammed by the Dagupan bus.

The impact caused the truck to tumble several times. Army officials said, adding that most of the soldiers were either thrown out of the vehicle or were pinned to death.

Col. Hilario Anselmo, commander of the Army's 502nd Infantry Brigade based in Isaac town, said five soldiers were killed instantly while three others died before reaching the Dr. Jose Hospital in Santiago City.

The fatalities were identified as Sergeants Jose Baquiran, Pedro Mejares and Leonardo Villegas, 05; Frederick Grobalia, Cpl. Joselito Antonio, a certain Cabiguenda and a Bedolfino.

Two corporals were slightly injured. Villamor Mojica Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

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LONE VAULT
An evacuee from communities near the restive Mayon volcano squats on the metal bar bars in a vacated relief goods at the Bagumbayan Central School in Legazpi City where the goods are being distributed.

Immigration agent charged with kidnapping

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—POLICE have filed a kidnap for ransom case against an immigration agent and three of his alleged cohorts who abducted an Indian national in Alaminos, Cavite two weeks ago, a police official said.

Supt. Daniel Sermonia, intelligence chief of the Cavite police, identified the suspect as Atty. Lindsor Jose Diego, an employee of the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation, and members of Bacnotan, Pantabangan (CPO).

Three of the suspect's companions remained undescribed, he said.

The case for kidnapping has been filed at the provincial prosecutor's office in Imus, Cavite.

"As of now, we cannot arrest the suspect because we have to wait for an arrest warrant to be issued by the court. This is not an urgent case," Sermonia told the reporters in a mobile phone interview.

A police report said victim Mangat Ram, 32, businessman and resident of Barangay Nibungan, Alaminos town, was snatched from his house by the suspects at around noon last July 26.

The suspects, armed with long firearms, dragged the victim into a waiting Toyota Revo (SFW 361) and took turns beating him up when he put up a fight.

The vehicle then sped toward Tagaytay City.

Sana told police investigators that the suspects immediately asked for P300,000 cash in exchange for his safe release.

The victim negotiated with the suspects and was able to lower the ransom to P75,000.

The victim narrated he was released somewhere in Imus, Cavite on the same day after he contacted his cousin, a certain Amarjit Singh, who promised to give the ransom demanded by the suspects.

The next day, the victim and his cousin delivered the money to the suspects at a road in Silang, Cavite.

Still terrified by the experience, the victim only reported the incident eight days after. —Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Farmers in land dispute freed on P1-M bail

LUMACA, QUEZON—AFTER posting bail amounting to nearly P1 million, 21 farmers from the Bondoc Peninsula who surrendered to authorities and stayed in prison for more than two months, had regained temporary freedom.

According to Jimmy Carranza, land tenure improvement program coordinator of the Philippine Ecumenical Action for Community Empowerment (PEACE) Foundation, the Agrarian Justice Foundation Inc. (AJFI) paid bail for the release of the farmers.

The AJFI and Huso Foundation are two of several local and international nongovernment organizations that have been helping the farmers in their struggle to have certain portions of coconut plantations in the towns of San Narciso, San Francisco and San Andres included in the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP), particularly where their homes and tenant farms are located.

Late afternoon on Thursday last week, seven of the farmers walked out of the Gumaca District Jail inside Camp Gen. Ananias Catolico in Lucena City after posting bail amounting to P150,000.

The seven, identified as Crescencio Lind, Mauricio Limpiado, Bienvenido Idolcam, Eberdio Idolcam, Martin Peras, Arnold Tolid, and Pedro Pisay, all residents of Barangay Isla in San Andres town, belong to the first batch of detainees whose released papers were completed Thursday before the end-of-office hours at the provincial jail compound.

"Due to the voluminous papers that need to be typed and signed by the authorities, the other farmers stayed inside the jail for one more night, Carranza said.

After Carranza explained the situation, the farmers prayed tearfully together inside the jail.

They embraced each other and whispered comforting words to those who need to stay for one more day.

Lind, the recognized leader of the imprisoned farmers, said he will immediately return to work to make up with his family for the last time while he was in prison.

"For the struggle will continue. We believe that justice will finally prevail in our favor," he said.

After their release, the seven were treated to dinner in a Lumaka restaurant by security men of PEACE.

"We want to make clients feel that this day is a special occasion for them," Carranza said.

Three weeks ago, the first to be granted with bail and allowed temporary freedom were the two older members of the group. "They were 70 and 68. We don't want their health to further deteriorate," Carranza said.

Yesterday afternoon, all the 14 remaining detainees, except one, were temporarily freed after their release papers were completed.

The release of Carlos Garot, a farmer from San Francisco town, was withheld after it was found he still has a pending case of frustrated homicide.

Carranza said they will also post bail for Garot's other criminal case. "We promised him that he will also be freed," he said. —Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon

Sorsogon gov scores foes of mining for dirty tricks

SORSOGON CITY—THE ACTIONS of militant antimining activists have become detrimental to foreign mining investors and the poor people who could benefit from their investments, Sorsogon Gov. Raul Lee said in a statement furnished the Inquirer.

Lee cited "how pesticide was sprayed to corrode some Lafayette's Rapu-Rapu project" and the massive damage was blamed on the company to stop its operation.

He added that the opponents of mining in the area also resorted to spreading a runaway hoax that was cleverly effected about 3,000 Inuyugan fishermen where the public stopped buying fish coming from Inuyugan.

"If the government fails to restrain these people, foreign investments in mining would definitely be affected," said Lee, who expects Sorsogon and Albay to benefit from mining.

He said scrutinizing critics despise the poor of work to feed their families and send their children to school.

Lee warned that after the polymetallic project in Rapu-Rapu passed the three-stage test run being conducted by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, it was expected to hire about 1,000 workers—most of them from the host communities—and generate new businesses that would generate more jobs.

The campaign to discredit Lafayette heightened following two oil spills from its mining site in Rapu-Rapu last year.

The government has opened up the country to mining, saying the industry could translate into billions of dollars in investments and could be the answer to the government's pressing deficit. —Bobby Lagsubian, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Activist says Baguio disabled shying away from job opportunities

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—A RIGHTS ACTIVIST for the disabled chastised the local community of the visually impaired, the hearing impaired and the wheelchair-bound for refusing to take up job opportunities in the mushrooming industry.

Blind Angelo Manuel, speaker Tina Ginnes-Podcast, who said to work as a local television and radio talk show host, said the industry has job offers for the blind in the form to handle medical transcription contracts or call center assignments here.

She blamed the community's self esteem problems. She said the disabled "must muster enough courage to at least consider the these jobs or lose the window of opportunity all together."

Mabalot and her brother, Antonio Llanes Jr., are behind the advocacy group Adaptive Technology for Rehabilitation, Integration and Empowerment of the Visually Impaired (ATREIEVI), which succeeded in convincing business leaders to design jobs for the visually impaired.

She reported to Mayor Bonifacio Bautista that only social worker Alma Bil-eg, 33, took up the challenge and had been briefed by a Manila-based medical transcription firm after undertaking extensive training.

Barring human error, the first disabled workers, as well as the first visually-impaired medical transcriptionist with no medical background, to be part of the soon soaring labor pool.

> '... the disabled must muster enough courage ...'

Dr. Michael Bergonia, of Total Transcription Solutions Inc. (TTSI) in Manila, said she is one of so few to be formally disabled medical transcribers.

The World Health Organization said 6.1 million Filipinos suffer from physical disabilities. In Baguio, disabled residents number less than 2,000.

SOME of Baguio's disabled citizens are being called to take up the challenge of job opportunities being offered to them by call centers and other industries that are starting to open up to the disabled.

Batangas has most murders in Calabarzon, says PNP

BATANGAS CITY—BATANGAS province has the highest murder rate in the Calabarzon region, according to statistics from the provincial police.

In a document entitled "Peace and Order Accomplishments Report" for January-June 2006, figures said Batangas had the highest number of murders with 102, followed by Cavite, 89; Quezon, 72; Laguna, 58; and Rizal, 37 during the six-month period.

With a total of 359 reported cases, the Calabarzon region topped the country's murder figures in the same period, the report said.

Supt. Archival Macala, Batangas police investigation chief, attributed this to the Batanguenos' sensitive ego.

"Sometimes, it is the character of the Batanguenos that easy just a wrong glance would already lead to an altercation," said Supt. Nilo Sean, Batangas City police chief.

Most of the killings usually resulted from heated arguments, Macala said.

Murders usually occurred on weekends during drinking sessions, he said.

Other cases were linked to politics, revenge and business strife.

Macala told the heinous that guns and knives were the usual deadly weapons used for murder.

Local guns are now available from P12,000 to P15,000 per unit, making it easy for suspects to acquire one, he added.

Atoy, meanwhile, explained that the police had no way of tracking and monitoring which among the residents owned loose firearms, except through designated checkpoints.

Police figures indicated that robberies, he said.

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Police figures indicated that Batangas was rewarded the highest murder rate in Batangas with 14.

Macala attributed this to the existing communist insurgency in the town.

He said some suspected NPA rebels and drug lords were already jailed in the police radar of Batangas.

The Task Force Human Rights Batangas recorded two cases of killers killed in the same period, with former political detainee Apolonio Mendoza of Barangay and suspected NPA commander Crispin Ledigbol of nearby Tuy town as casualties.

Both cases have remained unsolved.

The task force blamed the military for the murders.

The provincial police denied the murders in the country's pattern of political killings.

Batangas City recorded 13 murders while the Barangay City had 11.

Growing industrialization in Batangas City and proliferation of syndicates and gun-for-hire men in Tanauan City are the murder catalysts in the areas, police said. Marlon Alexander Luciano, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Cop executed by NPAs; signs of torture seen

LIVELIHOOD
A street vendor takes a nap under an umbrella near the San Pedro Church in Davao City

By Bobby Labales
and Fernan Glunan
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—A POLICEMAN who was abducted by communist guerrillas in Camarines Sur last week had already been executed for alleged "crimes against the people," a rebel leader confirmed Sunday.

The spokesperson of the communist-led National Democratic Front in Bicol, who identified himself as Ka Bathalena, said in a text message that the body of SPO1 Gene Libertario was now with his family.

The guerrillas buried the body in a shallow grave in the jungles of Sanggay Sublayan, Camaligan town on 4 days after his execution, according to authorities.

Libertario, a native of Masbate province who had been in law enforcement for 24 years, was on duty in Viga, 52 km from Camarines' capital town of Naga, when some masked men reportedly forced him into a jeep in Tabil, Camaligan that one of their seven children was sick.

He was riding on a motorcycle driven by a certain Jomel de Quiroz along the national road going to Tabil when they were intercepted at a checkpoint set up by about 60 New People's Army rebels belonging to the Merlito San Juan Command, who were believed to have just arrived on the island province from Camarines Sur.

The rebels commandeered a cityride and took the two instead the 89 along the Sabtang-Bangambang national secondary road. Libertario's companion was released unharmed hours later.

Bulaong said the release of the policeman's body to his family had been delayed by intensified police and military operations in the area.

Chief Supt. Victor Rosa, Bicol police director, condemned the "dastardly act" of the rebels, saying they took advantage of a helpless police officer when "only minister was so worry about his sick child."

Rosa expressed concern about the future of Libertario's family. "How will they live now?" he said.

Senior Supt. Sandra Sigmund Gaud, Camarines police chief, said the remains of Libertario, 49, was retrieved at about 2 p.m., Aug. 13.

Cesar was scheduled to be buried Sunday in Barangay Tabil, Camaligan town.

Gaud said police started looking for Libertario's body at 5 a.m. on Sunday after his wife received word from the NPA on the location of his grave.

The recovery team found Cesar still blindfolded and tied, with a fatal gunshot wound in the breast and numerous injuries to the head and different parts of the body.

A police source said the slain cop might have been tortured by his captors before he was buried alive.

The team that found his body said his legs had been severed and that some fingernails were forcibly pulled off.

Ka Quiroz was likewise spotted as one who had been killed by the NPA rebels.

Libertario's son revolver pistol in club him in the head. The guerrillas led him to a creek where they dragged him for about a kilometer.

The NPA Bicolano San Juan Command said in a text message that Cesar was punished for his active involvement in the counterinsurgency campaign, serving as guide in anti-rebel operations, and for unspecified abuses.

A police colleague, however, denied the NPA allegations.

He said Libertario treated several hectares of abaca farms and was engaged in the sugar trade while his wife ran a bakery.

Baguio warned of declining forest cover

BAGUIO CITY—FOREST COVER IN this mountain resort city has already been cut to its limit to be able to enjoy an improving air quality and for further reductions to give way to housing projects will make some areas prone to soil erosion, a top environment official said.

Only 20 percent of the original forest cover of 5,000 hectares has remained and the city's air quality may suffer if the existing forest continues to deteriorate, Samuel Penalbid, director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the Cordillera, said.

"We can say that 20 percent is enough and we should no longer reduce it. But the DENR will be clearing the branching of Seven Philippine Highways here. Under the program, the DENR will plant 16,000 seedlings along the 20-major highways, with a total length of 619.5 km, linking Abra, Ifugao, Benguet, Bugao, Kalinga and Mountain Province to Ilocos and Cagayan.

The city's remaining forested areas are Camp John Hay, Busol watershed, Bopog watershed and South Drive. If these are reduced, Penalbid said some sections would become vulnerable to soil erosion.

Air quality has improved since 2000 when tests conducted by the World Bank in the city's business district rated heavy pollution in the area, he said. Simpler laws in the area, particularly along Session Road where traffic is heavy, showed a reading of 329 mm grams (µg) of total suspended particulates (TSP).

Penalbid said that although the air sample taken in 2003 registered a high TSP compared to previous years, it still passed the standard of 230µg. In 2004, the TSP reading dropped to 206 µg and the total, it registered 152 µg.

The regional official attributed the improved air quality to heavy rains that cleansed the city of pollutants.

He urged settlers who planned to build houses in forested areas to replant the trees that would be cut down.

"Baguio City should really plan out what it really wants to do because there are subdivisions rising everywhere and there is no room anymore. Officials and residents should work hand in hand to protect the remaining forest cover," he said. (Jeanevie Cabana, Inquirer Northern Luzon)

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Message from the Embassy of India in the Philippines

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NO MAN'S LAND

An Army soldier keeps watch to keep people out of the danger zone near the base of Mt. Mayon in Barangay Bonga, Legazpi City, Albay, in the mid-dawn, 12 hrs. after yet another spectacular lava show before dawn Monday. Mayon continues with its solid explosions with scientists predicting "more pyroclastic flows" will probably occur in the following days due to its progressing explosions.

'TELL THAT TO THE RANGERS'

Restriction, not detention, for Marines

By Dona Z. Pazybugan

DESTINED OF BEING HOUSED IN A DETENTION facility in Fort San Felipe, seven of the 13 Marine officers implicated in the Feb. 24 failed coup will remain in a "staff house" at Fort Bonifacio for the duration of the investigation.

Except for ex-Marine commander Maj. Renato Miranda and Lt. Adel Querubin, all the rest have been restricted to a staff house at the Bonifacio Naval Station housing compound since Aug. 7, according to ex-Navy spokesman.

Miranda and Querubin, meanwhile, will remain in their quarters in Camp Aguinaldo.

"We would like to call it a controlled centre. It has a fence and it is under guard: 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Navy spokesman Cmdr. Divanard Ruevado said yesterday.

"We are complying with the guidance of higher headquarters especially Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Hermogenes Esperon... as the Marine officers are now restricted within the confines of the Bonifacio Naval Station," Ruevado said.

The others linked to the February plot are: Col. Oakmelcedar Leon, former chief of staff; Col. Jamsaiyr Carbajal; Lt. Col. Achilles Segovaldino, ex-commander of the 2nd Marine Battalion; Lt. Col. Martin Villamor; Lt. Col. Reynaldo Cesar; Lt. Col. Armando Ibanez, former deputy commandant for plans and programs; Lt. Col. Val Heroz; Lt. Col. Custodio Parreo, former deputy commandant for operations; Lt. Col. Renato Guadalupe; Maj. Domingo Penaranda; and 1Lt. Rolando Nieto, former aide-de-camp of the commandant.

Sather, Esperon said he expected the Navy to detain the 13 Marine officers, similar to the situation of 19 of the 25 Army Scout Rangers disclosed in the coup plot.

The Scout Rangers, led by former commander Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, have been detained in a detention security detention facility in Camp Capinpin in Tanay, Rizal, since last month, while the Marines were not even under any restriction prior to Aug. 7.

In a previous interview, former Army chief Esperon said he was informed by Navy Flag Officer in Command Vice Admiral Rodolfo Maynigo that the 13 Marines would be jailed at Fort San Felipe in Barangay Wawa, Cavite City.

The former Spanish garrison, where rebel junior officers behind the 2003 Oakwood mutiny are being held, however, needed to be renovated to accommodate additional detainees.

Ruevado said the Navy leadership found that the repairs in Fort San Felipe would take too long. "[But] that is still an option," he said.

Meanwhile, all the accused officers, except for Miranda, formally answered yesterday the charges of attempting to begin a mutiny (Article of War 67), and conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman (AW 96) during the anniversary of the PTA at the 1605 Officers' Club.

As in the past hearing, they were not handcuffed and they moved about the makeshift courtroom freely. Querubin was seen with an escort.

The hearing, however, was closed to the media for the first time, supposedly under orders of the Navy.

Querubin, according to his lawyer Rodrigo Aztut, stuck to his contention that he did not plan along with Lim to lead troops into withdrawing support from President Macapagal-Arroyo last Feb. 24.

3 RP hostages freed in Nigeria, says DFA

THREE FILIPINO ENERGY EXECUTIVES kidnapped in Nigeria have been freed and handed over to the Philippine Embassy in Abuja, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Cornelio Billeta, 51, Daniel Hernandez, 49, and Alberto Torres, 50, were turned over to embassy officials "about 20 minutes ago," Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos told reporters after briefing President Macapagal-Arroyo on the developments yesterday.

The three were abducted on Aug. 4 on Bonny Island, where they were working for Overseas Technical Services Nigeria on a multi-billion dollar liquefied natural gas project.

The CIA said they were freed on Sunday after their employer "negotiated for their release." It gave no other details of the negotiations. No group has claimed responsibility for the abductions.

There was no immediate word on Bidone Shephard, a German kidnapped along with his driver in the oil city of Port Harcourt near Bonny Island the same week.

The past seven months have seen a wave of kidnappings and attacks on oil facilities and personnel by separatist agitators in the Niger Delta, home to Nigeria's multi-billion-dollar oil and gas wealth. AFP

Aplus METRO
Editor Ester C. Dipasupil

2 in Ramos slay found guilty

ROBERTO Lumagui (front), Joel Abley and Michael Covil, suspects in the killing of Foreign Affairs official Aleta Ramos, show up in court for sentencing yesterday. Lumagui and Abley were convicted of the crime while Covil was acquitted and ordered released. GIRLIE PACE

Diplomat's trusted handyman, pal get 20-40 year prison term

By Tarra V. Quismundo

TWO MEN FROM SOUTH CELOTY TUESDAY of killing foreign affairs assistant secretary Aleta Ramos inside her home in Makati last year, an incident that shocked the diplomatic community.

Roberto Lumagui—the longtime handyman of Ramos—and his cohort Joel Abley were sentenced to reclusion perpetua, or a prison term of 20 to 40 years, for breaking into Ramos' home in Barangay Palanan and then strangling her to death.

Another suspect, Michael Covil, was acquitted by the judge for lack of evidence while the case against Jun Mariñas, the fourth suspect, was archived as he remained large.

Apart from the prison term, Judge Maria Cristina Cornejo of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 147 ordered Lumagui and Abley to pay Ramos' family P100,000 in damages. The two were also ordered to pay another P100,000 should they fail to return items they had stolen from the victim's house such as cameras, watches, cellular phones and jewelry.

Media men tried to get a reaction from Lumagui and Abley after the decision was handed down, but they refused to give a statement.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, on the other hand, was happy about the decision.

"We welcome the decision of the court; it shows how impartial Makati judges are. We believe the sentence was enough because it was based on evidence and the culpability of the accused," he said.

In her decision, Cornejo said that although the prosecution had presented only circumstantial evidence and did not have an eyewitness to prove their case, the admission of both Lumagui and Abley was enough to establish their guilt.

"The fact that no eyewitness was presented to positively identify the accused weakens not the prosecution's cause. Accused Lumagui and Abley unanimously named up to the commission of the crime," the judge added.

She also pointed out that the evidence presented by the prosecution was not overturned as the accused had waived their right to present evidence in their defense. The judge, meanwhile, threw out Lumagui's argument that he and his cohorts only meant to scare, not kill, the diplomat.

"It matters not how Ramos' death was caused. The indubitable fact is that she died 'by reason of and/or on the occasion of the robbery' during the killing or/and during or because of the latter, even if the killing is attempted, robbery with homicide is committed," said Cornejo.

She also gave weight to the testimonies of witnesses Rosalind and Judy Berba, parents of Lumagui's two co-accuses, who said in court that they overheard Lumagui and Abley talking about breaking into the Ramos residence days before the incident.

Ramos, 64, was the 14th secretary for Asia and Pacific Affairs at the time of her death. As the Philippine ambassador to Singapore in 1995, she figured prominently in government efforts to save the life of Flor Contemplacion, a housemaid found guilty of killing another Filipina in the city-state.

RAMOS: Justice at last

What Went Before

12 FEB Ramos got up early on April 24, 2003 to attend the funeral of then house at 6302 Bayle Street, Barangay Palanan, in Makati City which she shared with her sister, Alma. She had just entered the front door when hooded men jumped inside, gagged her mouth and hands and tied her up. The intruders then went to Alma's room, giving Leila a chance to escape. She dashed to the St. Claire's Medical Center, a block away from their house. But when the police arrived at the scene, the intruders had already left. Police found Alma bound inside her room, a white towel around tightly around her face and neck.

Authorities suspected that robbery was the motive behind the killing of the Foreign Affairs assistant secretary. About P1 million worth of valuables were reported missing, including a Rolex, two mobile phones, three cameras and two automated teller machine cards. Police later arrested Joel Abley who had told his friends about his involvement in the crime during a drinking spree. Abley later named Roberto Lumagui, Michael Covil and Jun Mariñas as his cohorts. Covil was arrested while Lumagui surrendered to authorities. Mariñas remains at large.

Lumagui said the group only wanted to scare the diplomat into giving up her money. He also claimed that he was unarmed and was later forced by Abley, the victim's eldest sister Rosario Ramos, who wanted to silence Ramos because of a bipolar disorder.

Cyril C. Bisaleñas, Inquirer Research

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Suspected operator of 3 shabu labs arrested

By Margaux C. Ortiz

AFTER TWO YEARS IN HIDING, one of the Chinese-Filipino suspects allegedly behind the operations of three shabu laboratories in Bataan and Bulacan finally fell in the hands of authorities.

Paul Tan, 35, was arrested in his house at 50 Mabuhaghag Street in Caloocan City, last week by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

NBI AIDTF Commander Joel Lauda said Tan was identified by the owners of a fishpond and a warehouse in Bataan—converted later into shabu laboratories—as the person who had rented the properties.

"Tan is the first Chinese-Filipino suspect behind those 'mega' shabu laboratories who has been arrested," Lauda said in a press conference at the NBI yesterday, where Tan was presented to the media.

He covered his face through out the news conference and refused to talk to reporters.

A report submitted by Lauda and PDEA Special Enforcement Unit "I" Chief Rod Bolivar said the two shabu mega laboratories in Bataan were put up by the Wang Wei Cheng Drug Trafficking Group.

In December 2004, a joint team of agents from the NBI AIDTF and the PDEA raided the laboratories in Barangay Pandao, Pilar town and in Barangay Lucanin, Mariveles. They seized 600 grams or 20,000 kg. of ephedrine, the principal component in the manufacture of shabu.

A third factory, located in Barangay Parish, Meycauayan, Bulacan, yielded 8,000 kg of ephedrine.

An investigation showed that the factory in Barangay Lucanin began operations in October 2004, while the Pandao laboratory was set to be closed and would be replaced by the laboratory in Meycauayan.

Initial reports indicated that the three laboratories were owned by Tan, a Guatemalan based in Cebu City until the Chemical Investigation and Investment Group busted the operations of his business partner, Calvin Tan.

Lauda said that except for a caretaker who was arrested in the Meycauayan laboratory, the Chinese chemists and the rest of the suspects eluded arrest and abandoned the factories.

NBI Director Nestor Mantaring said they were still looking for the other suspects identified as Thomas Ng Benson Chua, Lindo Chua, Andy Ang and their alleged partners Wang Wei Cheng or Wu Lin, a Chinese national.

"We will be coordinating with the Chinese police in the arrest of Wang whom we believe has returned to the mainland," Mantaring said.

A PAIR besides the bottle of water, one of several items prohibited on trains of the Metro Rail Transit and Light Rail Transit Line 1 following a failed terror plot in the United Kingdom. Security has been tightened in rail stations as well as bus terminals (left) to prevent a similar attack in the country.

MARTIN JOSEPH ALVAREZ

Journalism is a calling, not a profession

ON TARGET

RANNIE TERRY

DESPITE THOSE SCARY REPORTS about the thwarted plans by al-Qaeda-bomb airplanes, terrorists are in all the news — and listen — way to reach your destination.

You'll just have to front with the inconvenience of going through the long queue and having your luggage — and your person — searched.

Nothing in this world is easy and safe at the same time these days. It's either difficult but safe, or easy but dangerous.

* * *

My condolences go to the families of the ABC 5 news team—reporter Hazel Ticzon and cameraperson Israel Quinto and Ismael Cabuguason—who died in an accident in Carmelcos North after covering the Mayon Volcano evacuation.

Reports and her TV crew were on their way back to Manila when their Mitsubishi Frontier's tire burst, causing it to swerve to the opposite lane and was struck into an oncoming bus.

Too bad that in the end, media journalists go through to keep the public informed till you read or hear about some of them getting killed in the line of duty.

If you think that journalists are scared by the dangers, they are scared by pressure from their employers, listeners and viewers the latest news and issues, think again.

For every reporter or columnist who dies fighting his pen or mightier sword, there will be three others willing to take on her challenge.

Journalism is not a profession, it's a calling, much like the priesthood.

* * *

My daughter, Josephine Marie ("Cora" to those close to her), graduated from La Salle recently.

A consistent honors student in her class, she has received offers from big companies to work for them. But she's reluctant to work to do so.

The reason? She's still waiting for a call from a TV network where she applied as a reporter.

The reporter's pay is half the salary she would be receiving if she accepted the job offers from the big companies.

I told her yesterday morning the kind of hardship and risks she would go through as a TV reporter. I pointed to the fact that hello! Kitchena and her crew.

Cora looked me in the eye and said something that made me proud of my little girl. "Dad, life itself is full of risks."

* * *

The New People's Army (NPA) made a cardinal blunder when it attacked government troops who were involved in the evacuation and rescue of Mayon refugees.

It showed intelligence and commendation in the ranks of the guerrillas.

The poor people, whom the NPAs claim to champion, were the ones adversely affected by the attacks on government soldiers in Albay.

Antibandit soldiers who were on mercy missions was the lowest way for the NPA to lose grassroots support.

* * *

But government troops should not base its their guard down even if they were on mercy missions.

They should have known that guerrillas don't fight conventional warfare, where courtesies are given by the rules.

There's no room in the military. It's laughable to be defeated in combat, but unforgivable to be caught by surprise.

* * *

Former Bombong Pilipinas beauty queen Zuleima Arnaiz thought that separating from her Arab husband in 1991 meant their children could carry her name instead of her husband's Muslim name.

She was wrong. Her ex-husband, Prince Ali Bondagji, a family official, has filed a contempt case against her children's schools, Brent School and Ateneo Grade School, for refusing to let children's Christian names.

Why do we allow this guy to rule roughshod over us?

METROBRIEFS

Fire hits warehouse

A fire that broke out at the northern section of gift items and wooden baskets at Tanguay City directly before midnight Monday. No one was injured but damage is estimated to be in the millions. In his report to city fire marshal Senior Insp. Rogelio delaPaz, arson investigator SFO1 Douglas Alabanza said the blaze started at 11:45 p.m. and was finally put out at 1:15 a.m. The cause of the fire was still under investigation. Alabanza said the fire razed the warehouse of Tanguay Wooden Products, which is owned by Ms. Lilia Pua. Pua said the estimated damage is at least P1 million. Jocelyn R. Uy

Clueless about stay

TIRO CHICA arrived safely at Laguindingan Airport in Misamis Oriental on Saturday morning, but she's still not sure whether she'll stay in the province or return to Manila. Tiro Chica, 53, was among the 1,200 passengers of Sulpicio Lines' M/V Princess of the Orient that sank off Cebu province on Aug. 18 after it was battered by typhoon Ineng. Chica said she was not sure whether she would stay in Misamis Oriental or go back to Manila. Chica said she was still undecided on what to do with her life. Jocelyn R. Uy

Dengue alert raised

THE DEPARTMENT of Education (DepEd) raised the alert on dengue fever in Negros Occidental after a teenager reportedly died due to dengue in Manapla, City. Dr. Alice Ann Ong said in a statement that the death of the Weekly Disease Surveillance Report of the Department of Health (DOH) showing that dengue fever remains endemic in the list of common diseases during the rainy season. Jacob Paya

APB fruit deadline

TODAY is the deadline for the early bird registration for the 3rd International Convention of the Abra Producers Federation, or Int. PFI-33 of the Iglesia Ni Cristo to be held at Quezon Convention Center, Quezon City. Early registration entitles participants to a special discount. Only 10,000 seats are available. Those who want to avail the discount may call the office of Bro. Demetrio Imbrosa at the Abra Provincial Capitol, Bangued, Abra at 074-752-7777 (local 7205) and 074-752-7 mails can also be sent to Abra2006@yahoo.com.

New security policy at MRT-3 gets cheers, jeers from commuters

By DJ Yap

PUBLIC REACTION WAS MIXED but generally favorable to the new security policy at the Metro Rail Transit 3 forbidding liquids, gel and similar items containing liquid on its trains.

At the North Edsa station in Quezon City, most of those interviewed said they approved of the restrictions, saying it was better to be safe than sorry in light of the foiled terrorist plot in the United Kingdom.

The ban, imposed on Saturday, covers any form of liquid such as bottled water or beverages in cans. Also prohibited are lotions, toothpaste, hair gel and other products of a similar consistency like perfume or colognes.

Others, however thought that the inclusion of bottled water and even toothpaste in the list of banned items was too much.

"Maybe if it's a container they're checking, it would be okay because you can't see what's inside. But in the case of bottled water, anyone can see it's really just water," said Lani Ontong, 28, who works for a bank.

She added that although it was good the MRT had taken steps to prevent bombing incidents at the railways, the safety measures should not create too much inconvenience to commuters.

"Just this morning, the lines were so long because it took the guard some time to check each item," she said.

For 66-year-old businessman Greg Arcangel, however, the safety of the passengers was worth several minutes of waiting.

A security guard at the station said bottled water and other liquids may be allowed on board the trains provided the passenger agrees to take a sip of the liquid to prove that it is safe, or show an official receipt for the items.

Nassid Mangkaya, 21, agreed that the inspection was justified, since "we never know when something might happen."

But he said asking for a receipt for the beverages was going a bit too far. "I don't think there's any need to do that. It's enough that they check the items," he said.

NBI nabs suspected cyber sex den owner

By Margaux C. Ortiz

AGENTS OF THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) last week arrested a British and his alleged accomplices, who were reportedly operating cyber sex dens in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

DID YOU KNOW

SAMBALES—the district in the City of Manila which is also home to fuel depots—was previously known as "Tondoman" because of the abundance of pandan plants in the area.

Pedrosan with language barriers. Filipinos who lived in the area told the Spaniards, however, resulted in a new name for the district. Thus, Pandanan became Pandacan.

Among the district's more famous residents were Apolinario Mabini, Father Jacinto Zamora (who would later be put to death by the Spaniards along with Fathers Mariano Gomez and Jose Burgos), Francisco Baltazar and Lope K. Santos.

Cyrell L. Bunachonte, Inquirer Research

NBI director Nestor Mantaring, however, refused to disclose the identities of the suspects because Section 7 of Republic Act No. 9208 (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003) prohibits the identification of the victim and protected persons or of the accused "to recognize the privacy of both victim and accused and ensure a fair and impartial proceeding."

An investigation conducted by the NBI Intelligence Special Operations Division showed that the suspects, who allegedly operated and maintained cyber sex den in Pampanga, employed minors to work as helpers and later forced them to join as sex models for a fee of P25 per minute.

Reporter wounded in Valenzuela ambush

TABLOID reporter Roger Pantoja talks to Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, Northern Police District director, who visited him in the hospital yesterday.

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A REPORTER FOR A TABLOID was wounded after a lone suspect shot him at around 5:30 a.m. yesterday in Valenzuela City.

Roger Pantoja, 52, a reporter for Tikas, was taken to the hospital for treatment. He, however, identified a certain George de Jesus as the person behind the attempt on his life.

Pantoja's case was the fourth attack on members of the press in the Caloocan (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela) area in the past four months. In May, Isaki reporter Albert Omimo was killed in an ambush in Caloocan City.

On July 20, DZRH announcer Ralph Bebot was robbed and shot dead in front of his house, also in Caloocan City.

Three days later, Omimo's cousin, Prudencio Melendres, a photographer for the tabloid Tanod, was also gunned down in Malabon City.

Valenzuela police chief Supt. Bebson said Pantoja was shot by a lone suspect on his motorcycle in Malinta while he was on board a tricycle.

The victim, who moonlights as a tricycle driver, told the police that a man flagged him down and asked to be brought to St. Andrew.

"But before reaching their destination, the passenger repeatedly ordered him to stop. A man then appeared and shot Pantoja several times," Bebson said.

The motive's not said the incident would be related to his columnist's position as an officer of an organization of tricycle drivers.

New NCRPO chief vows 'safer' Metro for residents

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE BARS FOGGED, BUT THEY briefly flinched as they stood in line to welcome their new chief.

A hundred policemen braved the downpour yesterday at the turnover rites of the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) command marking the assumption as the post of its new chief, Director Reynaldo Varilla, who replaced outgoing Deputy Director General Vidal Querol.

In his speech yesterday Varilla called on all the NCRPO personnel to "walk with him in his journey" in turning Metro Manila into a peaceful place to live in.

"You're finally, we can only do so much. But collectively and in active partnership with the community, we can accomplish this," he said.

A member of the Philippine Military Academy's Class '75, Varilla won the heart of the Philippine National Police's Directorate for Intelligence before he moved to his new post.

Querol retired from the police service on Sunday, the same day he turned 56, the mandatory retirement age for police officers.

Varilla said he would also continue Querol's pet project, "Right search," which, according to police, contributed to the significant decline of crime incidents since it was launched late last year, especially organizing crimes affecting the call center industry.

Bombers slaughter 57 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—INSURGENTS SLAUGHTERED at least 57 people in a bomb and missile attack on a busy Baghdad neighborhood, officials said Monday, while Iraq's embattled government faced the political fallout of the blitz.

An executive dragged seven bloodied corpses from rubble left by a Qudyaya missile on Sunday night's blast, three more car bombs killed three people in downtown Baghdad and a missile crashed into the fortified "Green Zone."

Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki accused Iraq's extremists of seeking to ignite civil war "by smashing the mosque known as Al-Samarrah, where a combination of suicide car bombs and missiles demolished two buildings.

"We strongly condemn the series of terrorist attacks which were carried out by takfiris (Sunni fundamentalist terrorists) on Sunday which killed dozens of people," the Shiite premier said, in a statement released by his office.

"The terrorists pursued this ugly crime to kill as many innocent victims as possible and this is evidence of their hatred for Iraq and their attempt to incite division and sectarian fighting among Iraqi people," he said.

An Interior ministry official said insurgents lobbed missiles into Zafaraniyah—demolishing a four-story apartment block—then targeted recovery with suicide bombers in a car and on a motorcycle.

At least the toll at 57 dead and more than 150 injured, but said the blast was expected to rise further. "There's rubble on the streets. Whole families were killed," he told AFP from the interior ministry's security control room.

The attack marked the worst single loss of life since July 1, when a truck bomb killed 60, and hard-pressed militia reported dozens of recently wounded residents arriving in hospital wards from the southeast of the capital.

Meanwhile, police and witnesses said that three more bombs had gone off in downtown Baghdad Monday, killing three more civilians. Police at the scene of one of the blasts told AFP that the bomb had not fully detonated.

Four Australian soldiers were also wounded Monday in a rocket attack on the fortified "Green Zone," the seat of Maliki's government, home to the US and British embassies and an important coalition military base.

Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, the head of the Australian Defence Force, said three male soldiers had already been discharged from hospital while a female soldier remained in hospital in stable condition, he added.

The latest carnage took the shine off announcements by Maliki and his US allies about the arrest of many suspected insurgents and will erode the government's authority as it tries to win back control of its capital.

Shiite supporters of the radical anti-American cleric Moqtada al-Sadr lost no time in pinning their demand to be allowed to form armed self-defense units.

Sabah al-Saadi from Sadr's bloc of the government should "reactivate the role of the popular committees besides purging the security apparatus of dubious elements who use their official names to implement criminal acts."

He accused US forces—"the occupier"—of ordering Maliki not to allow Shiites to defend themselves. AFP

AN IRAQI man, with bloodstains on his robe, grieves for his late who remain under a collapsed building after multiple attacks in Baghdad Aug. 14. AL-FAW

IRAQIS inspect damage on a building at the site of multiple attacks in Baghdad Aug. 14. AL-FAW

WORLDBRIEFS

Munachir denies trying to topple gov't

KUALA LUMPUR—FORMER MALAYSIAN premier Mahathir Mohamad on Monday denied allegations he was trying to topple the government which he has bitterly criticized in recent months. Influential cabinet minister Nazri Abdul Aziz over the weekend accused Mahathir of working to unseat Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who was handed the top job when the veteran leader stood down in 2003. "I have no way of toppling the prime minister of this country... No, no way," Mahathir, 81, was quoted as saying in the New Straits Times. "I am not forming a new party and I am not doing anything. I am not even criticizing Pak Lah (Abdullah)," he said, referring to the United Malays National Organisation (Umno) party ruled Malaysia since independence in 1957. AFP

Scandal in Brazil over piano competition

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL—THE NOW VILLA-LOBOS International Piano Competition was meant to remind the world that Brazil isn't just a pop music force and to encourage young pianists to add works by Brazil's most renowned classical composer to their repertoire. Instead, the wedding-cake bagpipe here Monday ends its hours tarnished by accusations that the process of selecting the contestants has been manipulated. The charges come from the former director of the competition, an Israeli pianist named Ilan Rechtman, who was dismissed in April. He said that John Neschling, the conductor and artistic director of the Sao Paulo State Symphony Orchestra, the organizers of the competition, improperly interfered with the selection process to such an extent that 11 of the 20 pianists who will be playing here were not on an original list of closest candidates. NYT

US court upholds Lipitor basic patent

NEW YORK—PFIZER INC HAS SAID THAT A panel of the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has upheld the exclusivity of the main patent covering atorvastatin, the active ingredient in Lipitor, maintaining patent protection for Lipitor in the US until March 2018. The Appeals Court also ruled that a second patent (US 5,273,995) on the same molecule covering the calcium salt of atorvastatin is invalid on technical grounds. That patent would have expired in June 2011. The Appeals Court ruled in a lawsuit brought by Pfizer against the generic manufacturer Ranbaxy Ltd. The court held that Ranbaxy's generic atorvastatin product would infringe the company's basic patent (US 4,681,893) broadly covering atorvastatin.

Castro cautions his recovery could take time

HAVANA shows the front page of Cuban newspaper Juventud Rebelde (Rebel Youth) with a recent picture of Castro and a headline which reads "I Feel Very Happy" Aug. 13 in Havana. Castro said Sunday—the day of his 80th birthday—that he had improved "considerably." AFP

HAVANA—ILL-ING CUBAN leader Fidel Castro said his recovery could take time and also showed Cubans he is ready for bad news, while writing powerful Raul Castro assigned more his brother's public role by greeting Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez as he arrived for a visit.

Nearly two weeks after Fidel Castro temporarily ceded power to his younger brother—the first change of control in the communist Caribbean nation in 47 years—Cubans finally got a look at both men on Sunday.

Fidel Castro appeared in photographs to mark his birthday. Cubans for years will allow on his 80th birthday. Raul Castro met Chavez, a top Cuba ally, with a salute and a hug at the Havana airport.

The communist party newspaper Juventud Rebelde published what it said were exclusive pictures of Fidel Castro, along with a cautionary message attributed to the leader saying he faced a long recovery.

"I suggest you be optimistic and, at the same time, always prepared to receive bad news," he said in his message.

"To say the stability has improved considerably is not to tell a lie. To say that the period of recovery will be short and there is now no risk would be absolutely incorrect," Castro said in the message posted on the youth daily's Web site (http://www.juventudrebelde.cu).

The four pictures were the first of Castro since he ceded power on July 31 due to surgery to stop intestinal bleeding.

They showed Castro from the neck up, wearing a track suit in a bedroom. In one, he was holding a birthday equipment published by the Communist Party newspaper Granma on Saturday apparently to show the pictures were current.

Venezuela's presidential press office said Chavez met with Castro but did not describe the meeting. In Bolivia, President Evo Morales sang "Happy Birthday, comandante" to Castro on Sunday and vowed to take him a birthday cake made with coca leaves, the raw material used to make cocaine.

News that their leader had reappeared and was on the mend came as a relief to many Cubans worried his death could create upheaval in one of the world's last communist outposts. Others were more skeptical about the picture and thought his condition was worse than the nation was being told.

Details of Castro's health are considered a state secret.

It is not known just what kind of operation he underwent, nor if he will be able to resume his government duties.

Castro is the last of the Cold War-era figures in the world stage and has survived 10 US presidents despite efforts to end him. He also survived the collapse of Cuba's benefactor, the Soviet Union. REUTERS/AFP

Mexico leftist vows civil disobedience over polls

MEXICO CITY—AS THE COURTS completed a partial account of votes in last month's presidential election, the beleaguered leftist candidate vowed Sunday to keep up a campaign of civil disobedience against the government for years, if necessary, to prevent what he says as a fraudulent election.

Speaking at a rally in the capital's central square, the candidate, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, former Mexico City mayor who championed the cause of the poor, declared: "The object of our movement is to save democracy and make the Constitution mean something."

"We are prepared to resist for what, over time is necessary, even for years, if the circumstances merit it," he added. "Here and now begins a new chapter in the life of Mexico. The stolen republic is finished."

Last month, the official tally by the Federal Electoral Commission showed that Felipe Calderon, the conservative candidate, from President Vicente Fox's National Action Party, had won a narrow victory—243,000 votes out of 41 million cast.

But Lopez Obrador insisted there had been fraud and demanded a full recount. In response, a special electoral tribunal responsible for ratifying the results and resolving challenges ordered a partial account of about 12,000 polling places. The tribunal member court must rule on the challenges and designate a new president by Sept. 6. The partial recount was to be finished by midnight Sunday.

Lopez Obrador's aides contended Sunday that evidence had surfaced during the partial recount that ballots were missing in some polling places while extra ballots had turned up in others. They cited the irregularities as evidence that ballot boxes had been stuffed in some precincts and that unused ballots had been disposed of in others.

Lopez Obrador said he would ask the electoral tribunal on Monday to annul the vote in 7,000 polling places where his representatives maintain that irregularities took place. His aides contend that throwing out the results from those polling places would give Lopez Obrador the victory. AFP

Pope: Church not just a collection of bans

By Philip Pullella

VATICAN CITY—POPE BENEDICT said in an interview aired on Sunday that Catholicism should not be seen as a "collection of prohibitions" because of bans on gay marriage, abortion and contraception but as a Church with positive values.

In the long and rare interview with German television and Vatican Radio, he also offered some personal insights, saying he was not lonely in his job but did not feel strong enough to play many long recreational sports like his predecessor John Paul.

He also said he was happy that the world was now noticing other aspects of his personality to correct the stereotype many people had of him while, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, he was the Church's chief doctrinal enforcer before his 2005 election.

The interview, which will be posted on the Vatican Web site www.vatican.va, was recorded last week at his summer retreat south of Rome and broadcast ahead of a trip to his native Germany next month.

Benedict said while he would not be unwilling as much as John Paul, he wanted to visit the Holy Land, but only "in a time of peace."

"Christianity, Catholicism, isn't a collection of prohibitions," the 79-year-old Pope said. "It's a positive option ... We've heard so much about what is not allowed that now it's time to say 'We have positive ideas to offer.'"

Benedict, responding to a question about the Church's positions against abortion, contraception and homosexual marriage, said: "In Brazil, it's important to stress what we want. Secondly, we can only have unity on the basis of something I believe; we need to see and reflect on the fact that it's not a Catholic invention that man and woman are made for each other, so that humanity can go on living; all cultures know this," he said.

Asked if the Church should not compromise on some of its dedicated positions, the Pope acknowledged it had to listen better lest to stress the positive.

"We need to do this, above all, in dialogue with cultures and religions," he said, adding that some Africans and Asians were "horrified by the coldness of our (Western) rationality."

Greater role for women

Benedict also said the Church was reflecting much more than before on the role of women but stressed that they could not become priests because Christ chose only men as his apostles.

He suggested, however, that canon (Church) law, which currently reserves high-level decision-making roles to ordained clergy, might someday be changed to give women more power in the Church short of the priesthood. REUTERS

THE BIBLE Bible, the smallest printed Bible, at a museum in Hagerstown, Md.

The WORLD

Edna Lorenzo B. Bueza

Quake charity may have financed plot

LONDON—BRITISH AND PAKISTANI INVESTIGATORS ARE trying to determine whether the group of Britons suspected of plotting to blow up as many as 10 commercial airliners may have received money raised for earthquake relief by a Pakistani charity that is a front for an Islamic militant group.

The charity, Jamaat ud Dawa, which is active in the mosques of Britain's largest cities, played a significant role in relief efforts after last October's devastating earthquake in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir. It is one of the most militant of the groups battling the part of Kashmir controlled by India. In May, it was labelled a terrorist organization by the US government.

British and Pakistani investigators are looking into the possibility that the group passed the earthquake donations raised in British mosques to the plotters, according to two people familiar with the investigation.

According to a former Pakistani official close to the intelligence officials there, Jamaat ud Dawa provided the money that was to be used to buy plane tickets for the suspects to conduct a practice run as well as tickets for the attacks themselves. The money is believed to have come directly from the group's network in the United Kingdom and was not sent from Pakistan, the former Pakistani official said.

"The Pakistanis have been asked by the British to examine the links between Jamaat ud Dawa and the suspects in the airplane attack," the former Pakistani official said.

According to a former British security official familiar with the investigation, some of the money raised in British mosques also went to the group's militant activities in Indian-controlled Kashmir.

On Wednesday, Pakistani officials detained Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, the head of the organization, after the earthquake, which killed some 73,000 people, Jamaat ud Dawa raised funds in British Pakistani neighborhoods in London, Birmingham and Manchester. Leaders of the group also urged British people of Pakistani origin to go to the region to help in the relief efforts, and hundreds did.

On Sunday, a senior US law enforcement official said that the British police and intelligence officials had identified several suspected accomplices to the plotters who are believed to have provided support to the plot outside Britain. The new suspects were identified by checking the arrested men's computers, the official said. AFP

UK, US lower threat levels, ease restrictions

LONDON—BRITAIN DOWNGRADED ITS SECURITY threat level on Monday as it appeared that police had apprehended all of the main figures in an alleged terror plot, a decision that was likely to ease travel for THOUSANDS at the country's airports.

The government lowered the threat level to "severe" from "critical"—the highest of five levels—with Home Secretary John Reid saying: "The police believe that the main suspects in the alleged plot were arrested last week."

British police staged pre-dawn raids on the homes of 24 terror suspects on Thursday over alleged plans to smuggle liquid explosives disguised as drinks or medicine onto US-bound planes and detonate them in mid-flight.

The "critical" alert level triggered exceptional security measures, with the authorities banning all carry-on baggage, with few exceptions.

The Department for Transport said on its website that following the security level downgrade passengers would now be allowed one piece of hand baggage, although the ban on carrying non-essential liquids would remain.

In Washington, the US Department of Homeland Security announced late Sunday it was downgrading the threat level for inbound flights from Britain to "code orange" from "code red," its highest security risk alert after Britain lowered its security threat level.

"The security measures already taken have allowed us to address an imminent threat of attack for flights between the United Kingdom and the United States," Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said in a statement.

The change to "code orange" on flights from Britain was effective immediately, the statement said.

The US threat level remains at "code orange," or "high," for all US domestic and international flights, it said.

A ban on liquids and gels in carry-on baggage also would remain in effect, it said.

But the US Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) allows Sunday-airline travelers to take in their carry-on luggage limited amounts of baby milk, personal prescription medicines and personal needs.

Wet combs of non-prescription medicine will be allowed as well.

However, all passengers will now be required to remove their shoes for X-ray inspection alongside their carry-on bags at airport checkpoints.

TSA continued to allow passengers to take on board baggage any personal electronics devices such as music players, which British authorities have been screening from planes, suspecting they could be used as bomb detonation devices.

Reid, however, said the government would not be in general alarm, and urged the public to remain vigilant.

"I want to stress ... that the change in the threat level does not mean that the threat has gone away," he said.

"There is still a very serious threat of an attack. The threat level is at severe indicating the high likelihood of an attempted terrorist attack at some stage, and I urge the public to remain vigilant."

Reid on Sunday said BBC television that Britain had thwarted "at least four major plots" since the July 7, 2005 bombings in London that left 56 people dead, and indicated that up to a dozen were under investigation.

Earlier this year, Peter Clarke, head of the Metropolitan Police's antiterrorist branch, said officers had stopped three and probably four attacks since the July 2005 bombings—while police were investigating 70 terrorist-related cases at home and around the world. AFP

Air strike kills 43 orphaned girls, S. Lanka rebels say

COLOMBO—TAMIL TIGER GUERRILLAS SAID Monday that 43 schoolgirls at an orphanage and 15 civilians huddled in a church have been killed in air and artillery attacks by Sri Lanka's military.

Air force jets hit a "Sencholai," an orphanage run by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), in the northeastern region of Mullaitivu, the Tigers said in a statement.

The government denied the attack and said the air force had only targeted an LTTE training facility in Mullaitivu.

"The schoolchildren were participating in a first aid seminar organized by (their) headcholai," the Tigers statement said. "The number of children killed is expected to be higher."

Sixty children were wounded in the air strikes, the statement said, adding that they were being taken to hospitals in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu, both in rebel-held territory in the north.

"It is a lie to say that schoolchildren were targeted," government spokesperson Chandripala Liyanage said. "The air force had bombed a LTTE training center. We don't know if they had moved child soldiers there."

Military officials confirmed that the air force was keeping up attacks in support of pursued troops rendering a rebel advance on the Jaffna peninsula, further to the north of the island.

The Swedish-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission said they received a complaint from the LTTE and members were on the way to the area to investigate.

"We have got a complaint from the LTTE that an orphanage has been bombed and that 58 children have been killed," spokesperson Thorfinn Unnarsson said. "Our monitors are on the way. We can't comment any further."

The United Nations agency for children, UNICEF, said it was also told of the incidents and had rushed officers from its base in the rebel-held town of Kilinochchi to investigate.

Ambulances were rushing the wounded, many of whom were bleeding heavily, to hospitals, the pro-rebel TamilNet reported.

The Tigers run orphanages to care for hundreds of war orphans in the rebel-held north-east.

It was not immediately clear if the bombed orphanage was the same one operated in January by the LTTE's supreme Velupillai Prabhakaran.

According to the Tigers at the time, the female-chicks comprised 11 residential blocks, an area for infants, an administrative block, a skill development annex, a cultural hall, a health annex, a library, study halls and a children's park.

The Sencholai or Tiger orphanages were first established in 1993 in Jaffna before its fall to the government in 1995. AFP

CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE

Pakistani girls hold national flags as they sing national songs during the Independence Day ceremony celebrations in Islamabad, Aug. 14. Pakistan is celebrating its 57th Independence Day after being granted independence from Britain in 1947, as the colonial regime ended freedom to the subcontinent. AFP

Women seen dominating millionaires' club

LONDON—WOMEN BILLIONAIRES will outnumber their male counterparts within 15 years as the total number of mega-rich quadruples, according to research on Monday.

Merrill Lynch Bank and Boston Consulting Group predicted 15 residents' blocks, an area for infants, an administrative block, a skill development annex, a cultural hall, a health annex, a library, study halls and a children's park.

The Sencholai or Tiger orphanages were first established in 1993 in Jaffna before its fall to the government in 1995. AFP

World now has more fat people than hungry

SYDNEY—THE WORLD NOW HAS more overweight people than hungry ones and governments should design economic strategies to influence national diets, a conference of international experts heard Monday.

The transition from a starving world to an obese one has happened with dramatic speed, US professor Barry Popkin told the annual conference of the International Association of Agricultural Economists.

"The reality is that globally for more obesity than undernutrition exists," Popkin said, adding that while hunger was slowly declining, obesity was rapidly spreading.

There are more than a billion overweight people in the world and 800 million who are undernourished, he said at the Gold Coast convention center near Brisbane. The world population is estimated at about 6.3 billion.

"Obesity is the worst globally and undernutrition, while still important in a few countries and in targeted populations in developing countries, is no longer the dominant disease."

The "burden of obesity," with its related illnesses, was also shifting from the rich to the poor, not only in urban but in rural areas around the world, he said.

China typified the change, with a rapid shift in diet from cereals to animal products and vegetable oils accompanied by a decline in physical work, more motorized transport and more television viewing.

But all countries had failed to address the obesity "boom," the University of North Carolina professor said.

Food prices could be used to manipulate people's diets and tax them toward healthier options, he suggested.

"For instance, if we charge money for every calorie of soft drink and fruit drink that was consumed, people would consume less of it.

"If we subsidize fruit and vegetable production, people would consume more of it and we would have a healthier diet."

University of Minnesota professor Benjamin Senauer used a comparative study of lifestyles in the United States and Japan to show how the rate of food and transport play a role in the problem.

"Japan has one of the lowest consumption of meats and the US one of the highest.

"The average Japanese household spends almost a quarter of its income on food compared to under 14 percent in the US," Senauer said.

While a direct tax on food in the US to reduce obesity would not be politically acceptable, agricultural subsidies which resulted in cheap food could be reduced.

But other factors such as exercise also played an important role and again economic influences were involved, he said.

"Japanese cities are based on efficient public transport—and walking. The average American commutes to work, drives to the supermarket and does as little walking as possible."

The average Japanese man walks 6.4 kilometers a day while almost a quarter of US adults may only walk between 1,500 and 3,000 steps a day, Senauer said.

While the relative cost of calories and fat had decreased over time, technology had eliminated much of the need for physical activity during work.

The most disastrous, perhaps, enough physical activity now required a conscious commitment to exercise and often cost money, such as the price of a round of golf or membership of a gym." AFP

AN OVERWEIGHT girl at Sydney's Bondi Beach. The transition from a starving world to an obese one has happened with dramatic speed, US Prof. Barry Popkin said. AFP

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Cards stay at No. 4; Bombers up

By Marc Anthony Reyes

MAPUA KEPT ITS FIRM GRIP OF THE LAST Final Four berth as the Cardinals walloped St. Benilde's collar-dwelling Blazers, 60-42, yesterday in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Coliseum.

The Cardinals improved to 6-3 as they outmuscled their three-game advantage over San Sebastian (5-7), Perpetual (3-7) and Jose Rizal (3-8) which created a round six by upending Philippine Christian, 65-62, in the day's first senior game.

Mark Penino starred for the Heathens by scoring the game-winning triple with 2.9 seconds left.

Despite the loss, the Dolphins stayed in third place at 9-1 although they lost ground to their bid to finish in the top two and avail of the twice-to-beat incentive in the Final four.

Defending champion Letran and San Beda Mapua lead the field with identical 9-1 records.

Raymond Tiong co-scored 15 points to lead the Cardinals on top of four rebounds and two assists, while Aiman Ecoben contributed nine points, four rebounds, two assists and two steals. Jerbinyon Gonzales had eight points and 11 rebounds, while Red Panizal chipped in four points and 11 rebounds for Mapua.

The Cardinals, who snapped a two-game skid, need just a win in their last three games against Letran, San Beda and PCU to clinch at least a tie for the fourth and last semifinal berth.

The Dolphins, who saw their four-game winning run ere short, blew a 52-42 advantage in the last quarter as Penino joined hands with Mark Cagayo, who delivered 11 of his 18 points in the last period.

"We're still alive. Although our fate is not in our hands, we are hopeful that hard-praying team will pull through," said JRU coach-in-ref Bonganciel, who took over just before the start of the season, a team that last reached the Final Four in 2003.

Floyd Dedicatoria also shone for JRU with 16 points, 10 rebounds, five steals, three blocks and three assists.

Phobert Dorsorio sustained a game-high 20 points to lead the Baby Dolphins in a 68-60 win over the Light Bombers in the four-juniors game.

The Baby Dolphins improved to 7-2, while pulling down the Lighties to 5-4.

PCU's Gabby Espinas evades two Jose Rizal U's Marvin Hayes as he chases the loose ball in yesterday's hotly-contested game at the Rizal Coliseum.

RP cagers eye sweep against tall Lebanese

INSPIRED BY ITS 19-POINT BLOWOUT WIN the first time around, the Jimi Miguel-led Batang Pilipinas attempts to sweep its two-game exhibition series against the Lebanese national team tomorrow.

Sunday's embarrassing defeat was definitely a downer for the Lebanese, Asia's second-best rugged side who are here to cap their preparations for the World Basketball Championship slated in Saitama, Japan, later this month.

And it should hurt them all the more knowing that they were beaten by a team that was barely assembled for the goodwill games.

"There is nothing that makes a coach speechless than his boys who had been drubbed in his absence," said Virtual coach Chot Reyes in a text message to assistant coach Quinito Arnedo. "It means the players and coaches understand what true teamwork is about. Congrats!"

Reyes is still in Taipei calling the shots for the San Miguel Beermen, who are seeing action in the Asian Intercontinental Club Championship.

Filipinos executed well

But while he was proud of what Team Philippines has accomplished, coach Norman Black —who is yards from joining the Reyes... guy coaching duo perspective, stating the visiting Lebanese are still trying to find their rhythm yet.

"Our players did what they had to do," said Black. "They executed well and held their own all the boards against the tall Lebanese."

But he was also quick to admit that the win over tonight may have the legs since they came in just the day before from their two-game sweep.

Lebanon beat Canada, without Steve Nash, last week, just a day after falling to Slovenia, a former Yugoslav republic.

"We were somewhat run-down now, I'm sure the Lebanese will recover their energy and give us a good challenge on Wednesday," Black said.

Game time is set at 7 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ben-Hur Abrajan, who scorched the visitors with 23 points, including 7 for 14, from behind the arc, is again expected to spark the RP Team's offense.

The Filipinos had a tentative start but found their rhythm in the second quarter with Abrajan sparking them ahead for good, 54-43, at the half.

LEBANON'S Joseph Nagel secures his eight rebound in its score as outmuscled tip-in off the RP Team's Kelly Beavis Sunday

Still a race halfway thru UAAP season

ATENEO AND UNIVERSITY of the East may be running 1-2 for the UAAP men's basketball tournament front-runners hardly feel secure.

"It's a little different from the past years when there were always a few teams in the forefront," said Ateneo coach Norman Black, whose Eagles needed a lot of scrambling to pull off a six-game sweep of the first round.

"This does not seem to be the case this year. I don't know if it's because of the new coaches in the league, but it seems all the teams have their own personalities and they try to win a certain way."

UE coach Dindo Pumaren said each team still has a fighting chance to get into the Final Four.

"It's still a level playing field," said Pumaren. "FEU struggled early in the season, then several upsets also happened. And even if Ateneo swept the first round, most of their games were close. So one's really sure which team will advance to the semis."

While the title-favorite Warriors had already faced tough competition, no one flashed souvenir form than the defending champion De La Salle-Zobel Green Archers.

They surprisingly dropped four straight games before recovering with a three-game win streak to end the first round.

"We've been in a close fight with other teams," said FEU mentor Bert Flores. "Nothing's set here. Every game adds an inch. We're picking up. The other teams also gave us a chance to catch up in the standings."

Johnson coach Leo Austria noted how a single slip could immediately affect a team's Final Four hopes.

"Every game, there are changes in the standings and there are a lot of things that can still happen," said Austria. "Before we were thinking that we might compete against UST and UP for the last [semifinal] slot. But now all the teams are fighting for slots."

By Jaymikee M. Payo

WOMEN'S CAGING

Lady Tams keep top spot

DAI DATUIN DREW 14 POINTS EACH from Kathy Mikey, Diana Jose and Aurora Arbizo in dumping National, 95-81, Saturday to remain on top in the UAAP women's basketball tournament.

Playing on their homecourt in Mendiola, the Lady Tamaraws also drew 12 points from Aurora Arbizo and 10 from Cherie Mejia in the winning three-fifth notch on strategy.

Jocelyn Mejia scored 21 points and had seven rebounds for the Lady Bulldogs, who remained in the cellar with a 1-7 slate.

Arbizo, last year's losing finalist, stayed in the hunt with a 87-56 victory over University of the East at Mendiola as Angel Abone with a 16-point, 16-rebound performance.

Arbizo dished its fifth win in seven games 13-5 fall to 1-6.

In the other match, Jen Reyson and Janine Tolentino each finished with 13 points as University of the Philippines (2-4) downed University of Santo Tomas (3-3), 55-48.

Games on Wednesday at the Araneta Blue Eagle gym pit Adamson against Ateneo at 12 noon, UST against NU at 2:30 p.m. and FEU against UE at 5 p.m.

Rousing World Series start for Bacolod girls

THE BACOLOD CITY NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL and Training Center School began to bid for an international crown with a sixteen-run, seven-hit romp over its Asian counterpart Subbuli Shadal Arena at Field 31 of Lower Bel-Air in Maryland, Washington.

The ECCL softballers, the Asia-Pacific champions, posted a 4-0 pounding at Montalvo Weal, represented by the Murray-Hill squad from Beaverton, Oregon, to gain a share of the lead in the Pool C.

The Bacolodnon are in top spot of their group together with the Staples Girls team from Naples, Florida, which defeated Indian Trail Mustangs, Naples Boys, 6-0, in the other Pool Score contest.

Mexico's South, represented by Julio Pinkes, Florida, last year, in the defending champions in the 13-14 division.

The Bacolod squad, coached by Vilda Benjamin, Dina Sinillos and Lapitan Chaban, hopes to duplicate the feat of Bacolod's Pagbasa Village National High School's softball's counterpart's four and only World Series title in 2003.

The Filipinos ace their second straight win when they take on Central America, represented by Idyria of Utha, at Field 3 at 8 a.m. today.

PAGA, which placed second in the recent Palawan-ng Pandanan, finished third in its previous two World Series campaigns.

The Bacolodnon softballers entered the right to play in the world championship after sailing the 2006 Little League Philippine series in Bacolod (April).

In Pool A games, Asia-Pacific East demolished Europe-Middle East-Africa, 11-1, and Jamaica Southwest trampled host Hawaii Oceania/Northwest, 10-3.

The top two teams from each pool will advance to the semifinals with the semifinal matchups later drafting for the title.

—Christian-Jil Dan, Inquirer Visayas

Manila belles get going in Michigan

BALIMORE, MICHIGAN — JOAN MANILA plays two games today to start its campaign in the Big 5 league (16-16) Softball World Series title race at Northwest Park here. Manila is represented by Nonoy "Nay" Castillanes, who added in the series here two losses from the Golden Girls pitcher into action against Florida Polo at 10:30 a.m. Only returns to the starter Belle, one of the playing venues in the area teachers complete in Little Michigan at 2:30 p.m. Miss Bela Nava will start against Puerto Rico, the same team who lead to the 2003 Junior League World Series to Kirkland, Washington, while playing for Bacolod City. The Puerto Ricans, however, are coming to avoid their three-year jinx against the RP-ers. The last time the two squads met, the RP Golden Girls prevailed, 2-0.

Pagulayan battles teen sensation in Nat'l Pool opener

TOP SEED ALEX "THE LION" PAGULAYAN won the matchup of teenage sensation Jay Linton in the 2006 BSCP National Pool Championship which starts at 3 p.m. today at the Silver Spoon Billiards Center.

Pagulayan, the 2004 World Pool titlist, is supposed to handle Linton, a prized find from Davao who emerged unscathed in the qualifying round, and spark his bid for the P1-million championship game.

Legendary Jose "Pusang" Parica and veterans Jorge "Tatay" Facto taught in another featured match in the event organized by Rajo Sports and the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines.

Dindo Divalla is ranked No. 2 in the 64-man tournament which will follow the race-to-nine, winner's-break format.

The Canada-based Pagulayan is playing under the guide of Player Sports of former Dutch Player while Divalla is from Rajo's promotions of Rajo Sports Corp. Mandaue City.

"Isa't isa ang labanan sa National Open. Ang importante ay ma-break, makabag lamon yan," said Pagulayan.

Divalla agreed with Pagulayan, but said that the players' condition would also come into play.

The other ranked players are Dennis Orcollo (No. 3), Ronnie Alcano (4), Francisco Bustamante (5), Rodolfo Luat (6), Lee Genowa (7), Warren Kiamco (8), Antonio Gabica (9), Mario Soliman (10), Leonardo Andam (11), Jessie Bustamante (12), Antonio Gomez (13), Candy Jalbuena (14), Ronnie Alcano (15) and Alvin Luat (16).

PSCP chair Ric Mahalovena was scheduled to preside over the drawing of lots last night at the Rajo Sports office in Makati.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, PSC chairman Ricardo "Richie" Garcia and Gilli-chair Eric Buhain have been scheduled to grace the opening ceremonies and action involves Archt Manalo with the tournament break.

The event is sponsored by Smart Mobile, Alaska, PCSO, Sun Paper Corp, Willmarch, Accuzilla Balls, Iron Sleeves and Predator Cues.

Marilen Bernardino, contributor

BEST OF LUCK: Members of the Oregon-based International Little League Association of Manila (Imi Girls' Softball Team with primary sponsor Jean Henri Lhuillier (fourth from left, back row) at Caloocan Lhuillier during a recent sendoff party. The girls, also backed by Le Soleil de Boracay, are representing the Philippines and Asia Pacific in the 2006 Little League Softball World Series for 11-13 year-old players.

UM hangs on, rips UMak

DEFENDING CHAMPION UNIVERSITY OF Manila demolished University of Makati, 79-66, Sunday to keep its hopes alive in the 2006 Fiesta cup men's basketball tournament at the UM gym.

The Hawks, who lost three key contributors from last year's winning team, were led Del Santiago and Ryan Dalumbales to frustrate the Wizards and claim only their third win to score sole ties in this annual tournament sponsored by Bushwise, Filtrobi and Fresh Energy Drink.

Santiago led in game-high 20 points, while Dalumbales added 20 for the Lorma Tabernacle-nurtured Hawks, who have already lost three more members since they did in the past few years.

Jake Commercium paced the Wizards with 13 markers.

The scores

UM 79—Santiago 20, Dalumbales 20, Valdez 10, Rojas 8, Francis 6, Quema 4, Gaite 2, Flores 2, Asuncion 0, Aquino 0.

UMAK 66—Commercium 13, Alon 12, Gail 7, Mapoli 6, Ramos 6, Bangalang 6, Mangaser 5, Arbol 2.

Scores: 15-10, 28-18, 40-30, 79-66

SPORTSWATCH

Pitters at PSA Forum

THE COLORFUL EVENTS OF THE 2006 Metro Manila Pitters Championships on Aug. 19 to 27 will be formally launched at today's special session of the weekly PSA Forum at the Quezon Hall Hotel. Pasay Hiking Association of the Philippines president Dominico Cabrera hands guests organizing is the public sports program slated for the occasion. Kickoff of the activity will be Mayor Alfredo Mayor Lito Atienza and Makati city Mayor Jejomar Binay. Other grapplers in 40-50-s to canvass are officials of the Manila Lions Club Chairman BENJAMIN Dimaiwat by governors Federico Pe and Linda Ty. The group also announced training conforms to the national athletics training pool.

Sta. Ana 3-cuber today

QUEZON CITY NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL Gymnasium at the Sta. Ana Cockpit on 2/F Tejeros Convention Makati City. The first eight stories and p.m. Hosted by the Gregorianos Press group, the forty-four drawn overnight circuit-on some Rex Court Cole, Rex de Rivera, Lt. Officio, Williams Co. Pinoy Gabial, Fred Dizon, Ramon Wawawawan, Manny Cabanilas, Jun dela Pena, Orson Cantos, Bobby Cisneros, Lee Magpantay, the Super Pacman entry, Jerry Lazarus and Ricky Carcuena. "Elimination can expect slackening attendance of top three workers must start to be on," said press correspondent Nene Flores. For information call 888-2474 or 888-0973.

Passes in-law passes away

QUEZON CITY GAVIOLA, AGUINALDO & LAMP, IN operations and Philippine columnist Nestor Villanueva, passed away on Monday, Aug. 07, due to a lingering illness. He was 75. He remains lie in state at the Arlington Chapels on Aurora Avenue, Quezon City. Cremation will follow on Thursday. He is survived by children Rudy, Lydia, Albert, Francisco and Eliseo; grandchildren Jeffrey, Mandy, Lawrence, Jessie, Lou Ann, Leon, Regina, Raymond, Sabrina, Lucas and Elijah Dominique.

RACING FORM
BY TOP CHOICE

Balquin takes solo lead in Pichay chess

CANTILAN, SURIGAO DEL ...(CORRIES) BALquin beat Silliw Cagayan de Oro bet Antonio Chavez in second win on Monday to grab the solo lead in the 3rd Prospero Pichay Sr. Memorial Open chess tournament at the SSP-SC-MIT Complex here.

Expertly handling black, the 27-year-old Balquin dealt Chavez, 15, his first loss after 15 moves of a Modern defense and raised his total to 5.5 points to the nine-round Swiss system event holding a total pot of P300,000.

"His (Chavez) referee was when he overextended his kingside gambit in the hope that he would get an immediate attack," said Balquin. "(Strong grasps it's a) Bishop's Gambit Olivet' Defense (I) succeeded to get an attack, gained strong footing, tips pawns at 20's side. Kibuyen (Sunday) on secured as castle."

Balquin, who beat Mel Mirabuna Magz and **split the point with SSUDom Bernard Isidro** upon ending, Chavez, now has 5.5 points with three rounds to go in the event honoring the father of National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Prospero "Butch" Pichay.

In round seven, Balquin will face whoever wins in the board one battle between Brandt Bing (4.5 pts.) and Fernandez (5).

"Would be (shaping tornado per (Canadida pa dobit) one game drawn to stay (Chavez)," said Brandt Bing, the top favorite in the tournament dangling P300,000 in the champion. "He holds pressure."

Chavez, a product of Fighting Chess Defenders under the auspices of Mr. Cagayan Chess Club, stirred the rhythm ever upon chess tournament in Mindanao when he beat veteran NM Ernesto Rimin in round three and IM Richard Bitoon in round five.

Other featured round seven matches pit IM Darwin Leyla (4 pts.) against NM Prospero Cruz (4.5), Shubel Legaspi (4) versus fellow Manila bet IM Ronald Dablio (4) and IM Rolly Schlatter (4) against Gm Enrico Sy (4).

Also bidding for top 10 spot are 4 pointers Bernal, NM Roland Nolor, Maya, Cantagas Mandy Johnny Gonzalo, Jimmy Dano, NM John Paul Gomez, Carlos Montes III, Anthony Maldonado and Rodrigo Alejandro.

ELENA Dementieva celebrates her win over Jelena Jankovic.

Dementieva wears down foe for crown

CAROL, CALIFORNIA—THIRD seed Elena Dementieva went down Jelena Jankovic 6-3 6-4 6-3, to win the Los Angeles Open on Sunday.

"I'm working every day for these moments. I hope this momentum keeps going forever," the 23-year-old Russian said after clinching her maiden title on US hardcourts.

The 21-year-old Jankovic, who upset seven-time Grand Slam champion Serena Williams in the semi-finals, briefly turned the match around after losing the opening set.

She used her powerful backhand to great effect to help take the second set but the game tired early in the third and with a medical timeout at 5-6 Jankovic's fate sealed.

But Dementieva finally shed Jankovic deuce after the bubbly Serbian in the final game and won the two-and-a-half hour match with a forehand crosscourt winner, celebrating her second title of the year with a leap into the air.

"She's very unpredictable," Dementieva said, who upset top seed Maria Sharapova in the semis. "Strokes

Federer regains Rogers Cup title

ABSOLUTE finish for Roger Federer.

TORONTO...ROGER FEDERER won his second Rogers Cup in three years when he ruffled Richard Gasquet, 3-6, 6-3, 6-3, on Sunday's final.

Top-ranked Federer clinched his 40th career title, and 11th in the Masters Series. The Swiss star also won his 34th straight match and ninth straight trophy in North America since 2004.

Gasquet was fuming in because the fine French winner in the tournament's 125-year history. He beat Federer last year in Rome Cup for his career but five straight against him, including four this year.

Unseeded Gasquet started well by breaking Federer twice to claim the first set. Federer then stunned the second set 6-0 as never but came back to hold and break Gasquet in the next game. The world No. 1 sounded 5-3 and held firm.

Federer broke Gasquet at 2-2 in the decisive set and then seemed to sap the 20 year-old, who was broken again in his next service game.

Federer had no trouble after that. He raised his arms and smiled at the 10,000-strong crowd when he closed out the match in 1 hour, 47 minutes.

Federer won four straight three-set matches to log his seventh title this year, his won the Rogers Cup when it was last played in Toronto in 2004 but didn't defend the title last year.

Federer improved his match record to 52-4 this year. His only losses have been to Rafael Nadal. AP

Kerr wins as Stanford falters

KERR

LONDON, CANADA—EGOTTS by Angela Stanford on the last two holes delivered a shocking one-stroke victory to fellow American Cristie Kerr here Sunday at the $1.7 million LPGA Canadian Women's Open.

Kerr fired a final-round seven-under par 65 to finish on 12-under par 276 but Stanford looked on her way to a rare victory when Kerr sent back-to-back bogeys to steal a dream bid for the second title of her six-year career.

Kerr, who began the round eight strokes off the lead, won her second title of the season and eighth crown of her career.

"Unbelievable," Kerr said. "I feel like I played great but I still can't believe I won. It was just a magical day."

Stanford, 28, had only three bogeys in the prize three rounds to enter the day with a four-stroke lead in quest of her first victory since 2003. American Heather was third on 278. AFP

WANG Zhizhi (right) pats Nick on the eye by Anderson Franco Varejao of Brazil in their Stankonen Cup game in Nanjing.

Wang returns but China bows to Brazil

NANJING, CHINA—CHINA'S former basketball had Ivey Wang Zhizhi teamed up with the Ming for the first time in four years on Sunday but their sweet combo to give new NBA Charlotte Cup loss to Brazil.

Australia also came from 13 points down in the third quarter to beat France, 77-71, just days away from the Men's Championships.

Wang scored six points on 3/6 early return from an ankle injury while Yao, in his second match back from a broken foot, was contained by Tiago Splitter in a dis-appointing evening for China.

China are planning their hopes on Wang and Yao, dubbed the "Ming Dynasty," to bring the nation's basketball team into the world elite by the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Former Dallas Maverick power forward Wang, back in the fold after publicly apologizing for shunning the national team during a four-year stint in the United States, scored three from the crowd as he made the count in the first period.

But Brazil took a five-point lead at the start of the third quarter and expanded it to 71-51 by the end of the period as Splitter hit tough shots over Houston Rockets center Yao.

Phoenix Sun guard Leandro Barbosa's quick defense in the last, he helped lead Brazil from set-ups to repeatedly forced down China's defense for easy baskets and five chances.

"We had a great game plan today against China, especially in defense because we had a plan to play good defense against Yao Ming," Brazil-ian coach Lazar Sretenovic said.

"We had good defense, especially in the third quarter, we improved on our rebounding and had good offensive movement, that was the key for the game tonight."

In the fourth China slowed down way back to within 10 on the shooting of center Yi Jianlian, second Zhang Qingpeng and pure of forward Du Feng.

Yi, considered a future NBA prospect, led the Chinese side with 20 points and 12 rebounds, while Yao chipped in 14 points and roamed six boards.

China had started strongly with Yao netting seven points in the first quarter before being eclipsed by Splitter. AFP

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Tuesday, August 31, 2004

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

SPORTS

Balce stamps mark with 2 junior titles in Olivarez tilt

WORLD JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP VETERAN Mark Balce pulled off an impressive title double in the boys' 18-under and 16-under play yesterday in the Olivarez Age Group Tennis Championships at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque City.

The third-ranked Balce used a variety of shots to beat fourth-seed Jake Opalenia, 6-3, 6-1, for his ninth 18-under title of the year before claiming a fifth 16-under crown by doubling Juan Pilar Singh, 6-1, 6-1.

In other finals, third-seed Shamsis Olivarez stunned top seed Joao Opalenia, 6-4, 6-3, to snare the girls' 14-under title; No. 2 Melissa Ortiz a upended top-seed Trudy Ancheta, 7-5, 7-5, for the girls' 16-under title; and unranked Jennifer Salamon scored the tournament's biggest victory, whipping the 16-under crown over Joao Opalenia, 6-3, 6-4.

In the boys' competitions, second seed Jose Lorenzo Flores captured the boys' 14-under title over Kyle Cordero, 6-3, 6-1, second seed Jacob Legaspi downed third seed Ajudin dela Cruz, 6-2, 6-1, for the boys' 12-under phase, and third seed Ichiko Laguerceda the unseen 12-under title over Mark Escaner with a 6-3, 6-1 tiki, 6-3 win.

4 WNCAA teams score No. 1

LACORDELMOIR UNIVERSITY OF ASIA AND THE Pacific, World Citi Colleges and Our Brain Elementary took their respective foes over the weekend to post 2-0 records in the WNCAA 17th season opener volleyball tournament at the PCU gym. Lyceum's Senior 6 downsized last season, gave its debut game against St. Francis of Assisi College, 25-15, 25-9, 25-16, LCDM, which placed five league vets last year, beat Siena College, 25-9, 25-7, 25-20. CLARAP was stretched to five sets by its Seventeenth-Ist still sweetest, 25-15, 25-23, 25-25, 25-25, 15-14. AUC turned Philippine Women's University, 25-4, 25-18, 25-17, and BEEA routed Centro Escolar, 25-17, 25-22, 25-14. The four teams are winless in two games.

FELIX Cortez (left) and Gary Bates show the Hooey Cup, symbolic of the AP tandem's victory in the International Pairs finals, in Cardiff, Wales.

Filipino golfers put away International Pairs crown

THE PHILIPPINE TANDEM OF FELIX CORTEZ and Gary Bates fashioned an early second-round charge by Team France to win the seven-team International Duo World Finals at the Roman Road course of Celtic Manor Resort in Cardiff, Wales—site of the 2010 Ryder Cup.

The Filipinos, with rounds of 66-70 under the two-man fourball scoring format used for the 36-hole event among corporate executives, duo Jbe Cruz-Dominic Lozano) over the French, 36-37, with Ireland placing third with 52.

France also trailed the Philippines by three after the first round, with England a close third with 92 points followed by South Africa with 91, and Ireland, Canada and Scotland with 90.

Represented by Celine Mia and Olivier Pont, France grabbed the lead early in the second round with birdies on the first three holes. On the 12th hole, the French went 4 under for the day and 1 ahead of the Filipinos for the tournament.

But Cortez and Bates charged ahead with birdies on the 13th, 14th, 15th and 17th.

Jules capped the explosive 10 finish with a par-saving shot—a 100-yard fairway bunker blast to within 2 feet of the hole—which drew huge applause from the 1000 green gallery.

"When I saw the International Pairs website after we had qualified, I said to Gary that I didn't think we had a chance," Cortez said. "And here we are with the trophy. He can't believe it."

The year's International Pairs competition drew some 25,000 qualifiers from all over the world with all the national winners advancing to the Finals Finals

Dumandan tops C'fornia golf

MARVIN DUMANDAN ROLLED WITH A SIZZLING 32 ON THE BACK NINE TO finish with a one-under-71 and a one-stroke win in the North Orange County amateur golf championship at the Black Gold Golf Club in Yorba Linda, California, on Sunday.

The Filipino team member topped the tall and power-hitting American Freddy Wolfe with a 1-68 total at the close of the 36-hole tournament, which is part of the amateurgolf.com Tour, California's premier amateur golf circuit.

The 6-foot-6 Wolfe, incoming junior at UC Berkeley who boasts an average drive of 320 yards, closed with a 73 for a 141 total.

Michael Bilut chanted out the day's best score—a four-under-par 68—as no Filipino competitor from Brandon, who carded a 71, for third place at 143.

Jay Reyver, the fourth Philippine team member in the tournament, also rallied with a 71 but missed making it to the top 10 with a 149 for 13th place.

He shot a 78 Saturday.

Dumandan blew a one-shot lead overnight but came back with an eagle on the par-5 No. 13 and a closing birdie to foil Wolfe's bid for a playoff.

"Wolfe played really steady golf but Marvin just refused to give up," said Chris Carreon, coach of the four-man RP squad training under the FCTO golf program.

Dumandan's victory is expected to bolster his confidence when he tests the eight-man RP team to serve world's Singapore Amateur Golf Championship.

Dumandan appeared to have lost the battle after having the tom with a bogey started 39.

He finally got going with a birdie on No. 12 and then moved ahead again by blasting in from a greenside bunker for an eagle on the next hole.

The Filipino star gained down another birdie on No. 15, yielded the stroke back on the next, and Wolfe moved within one again with a birdie on the 17th.

Both players hit their drive down the middle of the par-5 18th hole, way with the American leaving Dumandan by some 25 yards.

But the Filipino, ignoring an out-of-bounds area on the left and a big lateral hazard, struck a solid 4-iron to within 15 feet off the top. He was joined for birdie.

Wolfe also finished with a two-putt birdie as he also reached the green, this time with a 6-foot second shot.

MARVIN Dumandan hits his second shot on No. 12 of Black Gold Golf Club. He birdied the hole. (CONTRIBUTED)

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul D. Mercado • Assistant Editor Cavin S. Ramona

T-bill rates decline across the board

91-day yield settles at 5.38%; 1-year at 7.339%

By Michelle V. Ramos

TREASURY BILL RATES dropped across all maturities for the second straight auction yesterday, fueled mainly by declining interest rates abroad and expectations that inflation would further ease in the months ahead.

The bellwether 91-day yield fell 0.7 basis points to 5.36 percent. The drop came on the back of strong appetite for the three-month government securities, with traders reacting P4.68 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P3 billion for each maturity. Other percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

"The market's overreaction was expected since it brought interest rate environment, especially with the BSP (Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas) keeping its policy rates unchanged," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after the auction.

The late for the 182-day bills fell 14 basis points to 6.307 percent in volume of bids for P5.42 billion. The 364-day bill fetched 7.339 percent, 16.4 basis points lower than its previous rate.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted a total of P6 billion worth of bids, thus raising the entire amount of its debt offering.

Cruz explained that the move of the US Federal Reserve to put an end to its successive policy rate increases could prompt the interest rates in emerging economies to go up. An increase in US rates makes government securities in emerging markets like the Philippines less attractive.

TURN TO P4

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **Finance cuts BIR** collection target for 2007 /B2

■ **Chaos at** the airport /B4

Bank sees peso breaching 50:$1 in Sept.

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO CAN CLIMB TO THE 50 LEVEL against the US dollar as early as next month and rally further to the P49.81 level by March next year given the country's improving economic fundamentals, Development Bank of Singapore predicted.

In Aug. 18 commentary by DBS Asian currency research group said the prospect for the peso was "heightening with upgrades in outlook for budget, exports and overseas worker remittances."

"Momentum remains for the US dollar to move lower (against the peso) to test psychological support at 50," the DBS said.

DBS expected the local currency to break past the year's high of 50.88 seen last March and hit 50.50 by September and 50.01 by year-end.

MORE, B3

Currencies

AUGUST
PESO-DOLLAR RATE

31.10 = $1
As of Tue, Aug. 14, 2006

50.63 = $1
As of Tue, Aug. 15, 2006

SOLD: 365.20-629.70

percent Hong Kong Aug. 14, 2006

Stock Market

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(For stock market report see Page B3)

Stocks end lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED SA PESO... [illegible] selling pressure ahead of fresh funds and in the wake of Wall Street's retreat on Friday, traders said.

Losses on Wall Street on fears of economic slowdown in the US and uncertainties on interest rates dampened investor sentiment, they said.

The composite index rose 13.86 points to 2,327.55 after moving between 2,329.38 and 2,305.85. The all-shares index fell 5.62 points to 1,431.71.

Turnover was 1.13 billion shares valued at P2.63 billion. Losers outnumbered gainers 121 to 74, with 49 stocks unchanged.

The market is looking forward with the second-quarter earnings season starting soon, "Wealthbuilder Equities Chief Financial Mo... [illegible]

MORE, B3

Finance cuts BIR collection target for 2007

Agency no longer responsible for meeting tax revenue goal from treasury bills, bonds

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE has slashed by P63 billion the Bureau of Internal Revenue's collection target for next year.

The BIR found its collection target for 2007, which was set by the national government, too high. This prompted the agency to ask the DOF to reduce the goal.

The DOF granted the BIR's plea and reduced the agency's collection target to P728 billion from the original level of P791 billion.

The P63 billion taken out of the BIR, 2007 target, according to the DOF, represents taxes on treasury bills and bonds, including documentary stamp taxes.

The BIR earlier said it should not be made accountable for shortfalls in collection of taxes on government securities, noting that tax collections on these depended solely on the amount of T-bills and bonds issued by the Bureau of the Treasury

DA seeks P6-B budget for irrigation projects

By Divinaa A. Gaplcan

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE is seeking a budget of P6-billion for the rehabilitation of irrigation facilities next year.

Agriculture Secretary Cesar[illegible] P. Purgatsaid the department was pursuing the inclusion of the amount in its 2007 budget.

Pangandaman explained that the rehabilitation of these facilities, which were used to irrigate 20,000 hectares of rice lands, is necessary to maximizing the gains achieved by the farm sector so far.

"They (the economic managers) already saw the impact of the timely release of the budget for irrigation on this year's production. The growth level this year can be replicated next year given the needed funds for irrigation," he said.

The Department of Budget and Management released P6.21 billion to the department for irrigation (P1.91 billion) and distribution of agricultural seeds (P0.3 billion) in the first semester.

He said that the early release of this year's budget impressed existing irrigation facilities including Pantabangan, Magat, Angat and Casecnan and the delivery of water to some 55,000 hectares of farmlands during the dry season.

He said that the additional funds were needed to complete the rehabilitation of all existing irrigation facilities that covered a total of 75,000 hectares of farmlands.

In a separate report, the National Irrigation Administration, an attached agency of the DA, said it was pursuing the implementation of 20 irrigation projects, 14 foreign assisted, 11 locally-funded (including continuing activities and carry-over projects) and four state agency projects.

The other projects for next year include the repair and rehabilitation of national and communal water systems, organization and development of irrigators' associations, and the preparation of feasibility studies on and the packaging of potential projects.

Some 115,400 jobs were generated in the construction of new irrigation projects and rehabilitation of existing irrigation systems this year.

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

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The course aims to:
1. Provide participants with a systematic framework and process for converting idle real property assets into profitable development ventures/projects.
2. Present the basic economics of selected options for real property asset development.

COURSE CONTENT

1. Assessing Opportunities for Idle Properties and Land Developed Properties: An Analytical Framework
   - Trends in Property Development in Asia Sub-sectors (residential, commercial and mixed-use leisure resorts)
   - Development Prototypes
2. Planning for Property Development
   - Adopting the business plan framework for property development
3. Implementation issues: Joint Development Options
4. Marketing tools
5. Financing Options

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Chaos at the airport

I WAS FLYING TO CEBU ONCE THE WEEKEND to get myself-bound, otherwise there will be nobody to continue my jokes after I retire in 14 years time. There was absolute chaos at the domestic airport. There were enormous queues of passengers, delayed buses by the new regulations. Absolutely no hand carry luggage was allowed on board, except baby's milk and medicines, exempted from the ban.

One man had a pendicitis bag, but in a 70-percent off sale in one of the malls, and the airport officials insisted on surrendering it. At the time, they found a white powder, which they thought might be an explosive or heroin, but it turned out to be hot powder. "Sorry", said the official. "But relax and we'll screw you".

Everyone was marched to transit zone three for an inactive member of the opposite sex. I haven't had so much pleasure in years and it was hard to control.

Halfway through the flight, I could see breaths in. I pulled out my asthma spray, which looks like a cigarette. Instantly two-day snowbirds appeared with ice-cold pints. "Tanqui," they yelled. I tried to explain what it was but they wouldn't listen. I was escorted into the cockpit. Eventually one of the marshals decided to throw it out of the plane. He opened the cargo door at 35,000 feet. Thirty-eight passengers are missing.

Arriving at the airport, a number of impeachment against the President were dismissed out of hand. The last one stating she was unfit to rule because of a hairy liver was referred to the Senate. Why don't they love alone?

The Mayor welcome is spewing mayonnaise and love notes are spouting from poets, but every lava tree and women's love tryst.

The captured bar has been renamed Mr. Bearbull.

* * *

Some readers have been annoyed with me because I refused to give any guidance on AFX but I could not as I had no information. Then on Tuesday morning, out of the blue, CMIW posted an eight-page disclosure with a drilling update on the Masara (Apex) mine. Simultaneously Apex posted an almost identical one. If you go to the PSE website you can read it in detail but here is a summary:

"A total of 1.4 million ounces of gold has been estimated, giving 7 to 9 years of production. Compared with previous estimates, the estimated resources have increased 79 percent to 258,000 ounces.

Crew is planned to report that 17,000 metres core drilling has been completed and is ongoing with 8 drill rigs at site. Drilling has been concentrated on the Masara-Panaanan vein, which offers the largest and most accessible ore system and has been delineated by initial underground development. The system hosts multiple veins with more than 3,000 metres strike-length, of which only a small portion was mined historically.

The assay results from current drilling all veins are: 5.0 grams a ton gold, 19.8 grams silver and an aluminum amount of copper. Commencing on three results, Mr. Jan Venturo, CEO of Crew Gold stated:

"It is pleasing to see the confirmation of the historical resource data together with the discovery of additional veins in the Masara-Panaanan system and the expansion of the known copper gold ore system. The company is looking forward to commissioning a 500 ton per day plant in September together with the expanded plant in late calendar quarter 2007. This expansion will provide total production capacity of approximately 2000 tons per day."

I DO NOT OWN ANY SHARES IN AFX and have not had time to analyze the report.

In the U.S., Stronsky poured and the argument on whether he should have raised rates once more now still rages. I repeat what I wrote last week. Wall Street will remain in a nervous mood until December, by which time there will be sufficient inflation data to know whether he reach the right call or not. The economy is too danger of going into a recession or if it only inflationary pressure that he has to watch.

Here at home, the news remains good. Agriculture production rose 5.4 percent in the first half owing to heavier rainfall. This will stabilized the price of food and ensure work for that sector, which accounts for 20 percent of the workforce.

Other good news is that exports in June rose 26 percent, more than expected, and rise followed a 15-percent gain in May. This will help loosen the trade deficit, which is covered easily by remittances. The Bureau of Customs beat its collection target for the sixth month after falling to do so when it raised their targets and explaining them.

The peso reached to four level in three months and the Treasury is considering buying back all the short-term debt and issuing P20 P30 billion of 10-year bonds in exchange. It has already bought back medium-term debt and issued P133 billion of 3-, 5- and 7-year bonds. The effect is to lengthen maturity dates so that the country will reduce interest payments and have more money for infrastructure, schools and hospitals. "At the end of the day it will be a win-win situation for the Philippines capital markets."

Consumer results were mixed. All announced profits only up 6 percent for the first half. AG BARA from P14 to P15.25. AC did much better, even allowing for non-recurring gains of P2.3 billion. PLI was disappointing with sales, up 11 percent and profits 9 percent. MERALCO produced a new high of P9.2. TEL reported an increase in profits of 6 percent but after forex losses, this turned in to an 8-percent loss. The shares fell sharply until the company announced a P68 dividend. PK announced a first-half profit of P1.3 billion, in line with expectations.

BOI declared a 10-percent stock dividend. ORE a P38 cash dividend and a 25-percent stock dividend, and PEDC a 50-percent stock dividend. I wish they would stop doing this, as I have to adjust all my charts.

Bayside Mines is a backdoor listing for PAL and GMA is thought to be a backdoor listing for an Australian mining company. There is also a backdoor listing for people with low income. (DOST-ASI. It is a joke).

As Monday is a holiday, my next article will appear on Wednesday in bearbull@hotmail.com

Mr. Bearbull

Bear Necessities

SM Investments reports 85% jump in 1st half profit to P5.05B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SM INVESTMENTS CORP. (SMIC), THE flagship of mall tycoon Henry Sy, posted an 85-percent jump in net profit for the first six months to P5.05 billion from P2.7 billion a year ago, largely boosted by equity gains from the sale of shares linked to its banking subsidiary Banco de Oro Universal Bank.

Including its shares in companies where it has a minority interest, net income in the first half rose 62 percent to P7.15 billion from P4.4 billion last year.

In a report to the Philippine Stock Exchange, SMIC said it booked extraordinary income of P1.3 billion in the first quarter of 2006 from the sale of Global Depositary Receipts—or a financial instrument used to raise capital in other U.S. dollars or euros.

The GDRs, whose underlying securities are shares in the listed firm, are listed on the London Stock Exchange.

SMIC's consolidated revenues for the six-month period amounted to P27.8 billion, up 11.3 percent from P25 billion in the same period last year.

Retail sales, which accounted for 70 percent of total revenues, rose 7.2 percent to P19.4 billion in the first half from P18.1 billion a year ago due to the contributions of new malls in Iloilo, which were opened in late 2005, and Old Sta. Mesa, Old Clark and Old Mall of Asia, which were opened in the first half of 2006.

Retail revenue sales surged 830 percent in the first half to P408 million from P48.3 million due to the sale of condominium units of SM Development Corp. (SMDC), Summit Towers near SM City Bicutan in Parañaque, as well as the sale of units at the Mimosa Residences near SM City Sta. Rosa.

Retail sales contributed 70% of P27.8B in revenues

SMDC, which is 58-percent owned by SMIC, sold residential condominiums worth P806 million.

Rental revenues from malls, which represented 27 percent of total revenues, grew 16.6 percent to P4.9 billion in the first half from P4.2 billion last year.

Equity in net earnings of associates decreased by 7.8 percent to P932 million in 2006 from P999 million in 2005.

Dividend income improved by 31.3 percent to P658.3 million for the six-month period from P486.7 million last year mainly from dividends from its investment in San Miguel Corp.

In terms of net income, shopping mall revenues for 40 percent, retail for 20 percent, and real estate, 3 percent. Banking and financial services and others accounted for 5.3 percent of total revenues and 19 percent of net income.

SM Prime, 52-percent owned by SMIC, reported its net income grew 9 percent in the first half to P2.6 billion.

Empire East turns around with P68.3-M profit in 1st half

PROPERTY FIRM EMPIRE EAST LAND HOLDings Inc. said it recorded a turnaround in net profit of P68.3 million in the first six months from a restated net loss of P655,000 last year due to higher revenues.

Empire East booked slight losses in the first half last year due to the treatment of client deeds as expenses based on new accounting standards, to ensure regularity.

In a report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Empire East said it booked revenues of P648.3 million in the first semester from P514.2 million in the same period last year.

Gross profit rose 9% percent to P446.8 million in the first six months from P77.5 million in the same period last year due to the construction of new and the completion of ongoing projects.

Sales were derived from the following projects: Laguna BelAir 3, Laguna BelAir 4 (Laguna), Greenhills Garden Square (Ortigas), Cubao Square (Cubao), Hillsborough (Alabang), Xavier Hills (Quezon City) and The Greenridge Village (Pasig-Cainta area).

Another major revenue contributor was the interest income derived from its Income Financing arrangement to P1.47.6 million in the first half, up from P 106 million in the same period last year.

Additional sources of revenue were rent-substitute from a subsidiary, rentals of its Cainta business park office-warehouse and commercial spaces of various projects.

Operating expenses posted a slight increase to P260.4 million in 2006 from P200.7 million in 2005.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

First Gen net income down 7% in first half

POWER PLANT OPERATOR FIRST GEN Corp. (First Gen) of the Lopez group reported a 7-percent decline in its consolidated net income in the first half to 846.9 million from 871.8 million in the same period last year due to additional provisions for income taxes.

In a financial report to the Philippine Stock Exchange, it said the additional provisions for taxes were made after an income tax holiday previously enjoyed by First Gas Power Corp. (FGPC), First Gen's 60-percent-owned subsidiary, expired last May.

FGPC owns the 1,000-megawatt Santa Rita combined-cycle natural gas-fired power plant.

With the expiration of FGPC's income tax holiday in May, First Gen recognized a provision for deferred income taxes amounting to P9.2 million.

This offset last year's benefit from deferred income taxes of 83.9 million.

First Gen's income before income tax, however, was higher by 11.8 percent at P76 million in the first half from P68 million as a result of savings from the consolidation of its expenses with both global companies and its joint venture partners.

The savings was supplemented by a jump in interest income due to First Gen's cash investments.

Total revenues in the first half rose to P467.4 million, up 17.6 percent due to fuel price increases.

Likewise, revenues from the sale of electricity rose 17.8 percent to $446.6 million during the six-month period from $396.3 million in 2005.

Higher sale of electricity was a result of an increase in the average prices of natural gas, a $25.5-million increase in supplemental charges due to accrued interests billed to Manila Electric Co. and lower sales tax charges due to the cancellation of excise taxes on natural gas.

Although fuel is a pass-through risk fully assumed by Meralco and does not affect the net income of the company, an increase in fuel prices, brought mainly by surging oil prices in the international market, contributed to the increase in revenues.

The increase in fuel prices was partially offset by changes in dispatch levels. Santa Rita generated a lower average dispatch of 71 percent for the first semester of 2006 from about 88 percent during the same period last year. This decrease was negated by a slight improvement in the average dispatch of San Lorenzo from 74 percent in 2005 to about 75 percent in 2006 given the completion of a San Lorenzo transmission line.

Administrative expenses went down by $6 million from the same period last year resulting from the favorable judgment in an arbitration case with Santa Rita's contractors, Siemens and a consortium between the gas utilities. This generated $7-million in savings from payments in professional fees and taxes.

First Gen operates principally through its two power plants—the 1,000-MW Sta. Rita, 900-MW San Lorenzo, 215-MW Avion and 98-MW Sabang plants under Energy. It is the holding company for all of the Lopez Group's power generation assets.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Stocks end lower

Pronouncing it

"We are also keeping a wary eye on the U.S. market, and whether the Dow Jones Industrial Average (DJIA) will see support at 11,000," he added.

The Dow fell 36.34 points to 11,166.05.

Traders in Banco de Oro accounted for 72 percent of total value turnover. The stock closed steady at P52.50 on volume of 60.1 million shares.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was down 0.6 at P2,810 but conglomerate Ayala Corp. rose P5 to P43.5.

Food and beverage conglomerate Universal Corp. is shares fell 60 centavos to P4.50 and its B-shares were unchanged at P4.56.

AFP

IN THIS ISSUE
DREAM cont. /D1

LIFESTYLE

Libre Cheche Bautista Fonseca

The shape of fitness in 2006

WELL AND GOOD

Thist Jacoy

FITNESS PROFESSIONALS from all over the world expect to learn new exercise programs at the annual Idea World Fitness Convention.

This year's news delivered exactly that—creative new formats and motivating variations on old favorites.

Not all of these new fitness ideas will be successful, meaning they will go past the tipping point to become staples of gyms and clubs around the globe.

The slide—a floor-based long slippery board—didn't last long after its initial presentation in the early '90s. Today, it survives only as a training tool for professional speed skaters.

In 2006, our very own walking was transformed into an exercise program. Trim Walks, by an innovative nonstop instructor who uses Fit-ness links jumping between workout pulses but more Physical Education rules.

Despite crowd marketing, lightweight foam poles and interesting choreography, it was barely a blip on the fitness radar screen.

A good idea inside the rest of time. Consult at stop aerobics and high-low impact aerobics. Step was introduced in 1990 and high-low has been around since the '80s. Both programs are still being taught in gyms. Idea continues to offer workshops because surveys show its members still want them.

Yoga and pilates have continued to climb in popularity the oldest 30-years now. Idea says the two formats are trending off this year but show no signs of declining anytime soon.

Spinning or indoor cycling is also holding on. Idea feels that fit in the palm of your hand, features like radio and large stability balls that you lie down and sit on are still revolvers.

Programs that are not new but have developed a growing following over the years are Nia (a mix of tai chi, martial arts, dance and Gyrokinesis and Gyrotonics (spinning flowing movements done on the mat and on wheel-like looking machines).

And speaking of having a following, Rico Perez, creator of Zumba, might soon be heading a Bruce role. I heard that actor-cool pop-lifestyle-action the United States were a-role-ex with this popular Latin aerobics class that they had Zumba tattooed on their inner wrists. Then called it being "zumbafied."

Now is that for dedication to an exercise program?

New programs

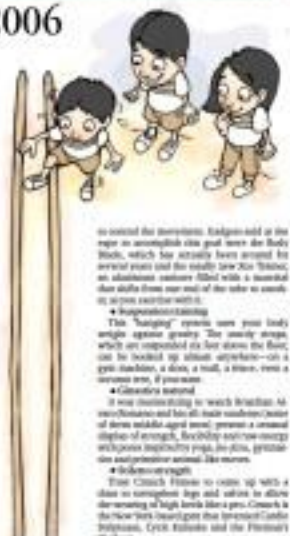
So what's new? Here's a short list of what caught my eye. Four pieces is as good as mine whether these programs will be coming soon to a gym near you.

• Brazilo ultra!

Barbilty balls are used as the "drums." The instructor, the various drumming techniques while standing up and moving around to all sorts of positions. It is a fun and energetic workout that uses the whole body.

• Interval impact training

A shifting or oscillating movement forces the body to react by tightening core muscles



to control the movements. Endgoes said at the rope to accomplish one goal were the Body Blade, which has actually been around for several years and the totally new Xco Trainer, an aluminum contraption filled with a treadmill that shifts from one end of the tube to another, as you exercise with it.

• Suspension training

This "hanging" system uses your body weight against gravity. The sweaty straps, which are suspended six feet above the floor, can be hooked up almost anywhere—on a gym doorknob, a door, a wall, a trave, even a secured area, if you want.

• Ginastica natural

It was interesting to watch Brazilian Alexeo Bonanno and his all-male workout (some of them middle-aged men) present a sensual display of strength, flexibility and raw energy with poses inspired by yoga, ballet, gymnastics and primitive animal-like moves.

• Iridescent strength

Tone Clinch Fitness to come up with a class to strengthen legs and calves to allow for wearing of high heels like a pro. Created by the New York-based gym that invented Cardio Striptease, Crick Rabinks and the Fireman's Workout.

Visit www.thespaceillusion.com

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Prone shoulder extension pulses

STRENGTHENS BACK of the shoulders, triceps and the upper/lower back.

Equipment:
Exercise mat:
Exercise methodology:

1. Lie face-down on a mat with your arms beside you, palms facing up.
2. Lift upper back (this extend arms behind you.
3. From this position, do small pulses upward.
4. Do desired repetitions.
5. Lower down to the mat.

Performance tips:

1. Avoid looking forward as you don't "clutch" your neck. Keep back in line with spine.
2. Squeeze or contract shoulder blades to hold your upper body in the starting position.
3. Pulse from the shoulders not your hands.
4. Do don't push relative as you pulse.

Repetitions:
Ten to 20 repetitions.

Music and Memories
with
Ms. Pilita Corrales
and
Christian Bautista

7PM, August 25, 2006
2L Activity Hub,
Starmall Las Piñas
Tel. 872-5249

MALL EVENTS THIS AUGUST

starmall EDSA - SHAW
Tel. 718-1866

METROPOLIS ALABANG starmall
Tel. 850-2645

starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. 872-5249

WOMEN who care. Raquel Garcia, Suki Lazaroglu and Tina Santos-Wahl

MAHF VP and treasurer Ramon Dagdales Jr.; Tina Schumacher, events consultant of European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines; and Tina French Baker's Jolanda Ros

HUNK Andre Watson Rodrigues and gorgeous Elsa Modeling owner Cecille Carpio

SON INC. 'S Junie de Mesa and Soraya deputy secretary for administration and financial services Amid Balisa

YOUNG achiever Weston Llamas of Millers Entertainment Inc.

REALTY get-set. Sy! MAHF president Ratil Bagaoisan and Eldon executive creative director Marnie Pelaschi do le tort-Didit for one of MAHF

Heroes make children's wishes come true

RAHLE. gives a couple of kids a warm, big hug.

DOES THE WORLD NEED A hero? Certainly.

At 'First Night,' an event to mark Eden Creative Solutions' first anniversary, superstar Ilike kids with life-threatening illnesses, found themselves surrounded by everyday heroes.

And, palengues, their wishes and dreams came true, thanks to the lab generosity of the event's invitees, who were asked by Eden and Make-A-Wish Foundation (MAWF).

"First Night' raised P40,000, a great help in fulfilling the simple and beautiful wishes of the kids," said Angelica Moravec, the lady dedicated to raising funds for MAWF, palengues.

Eden has been providing premium services to clients in the furniture, jewelry, banking and food industries, in a way of closing its current, it chose MAWF as beneficiary. Foundation president Rahlil Bagaoisan couldn't have been happier.

"I hope that by involving them in this occasion, we can show them a glimpse of the community where we can all be meaningful partners and friends," said enormously intelligent Monique Pella, Eden executive creative director.

Who did we see rubbing elbows at the one-studded event? Well, no less than Zaza Arellanodo herself, dahlings, assistant marketing manager of Officina del Tempo and Montblanc. She was happy it was a movie night, the perfect treat for kids while enoying or all ages and social groups, palengues.

All those attended Ilike, wearing red capes and Make-a-Wish T-shirts, their families, as well as the guests and sponsors, enjoyed the good, fun food, courses of The French Bistro, led by my favorite bakery-café owner, Jolanda Ros (who, incidentally, just opened his flagship store at SM Mall of Asia).

Popcorn and soda (and lots more) served before the movie started at Rockwell Power Plant Mall's Cinema 4. The kids munched as they watched, with starry eyes, "Superman Returns," palengues.

Publicity specialist Emilia B. Reyes Inc. donated its services in promoting the event, under the leadership of company founder, sister mary Asunsetta Germaine-Reyes and hubby, media whiz Benk Reyes, who said "there's no greater joy than seeing the happy faces of the children of Make A Wish Foundation."

Amen, palengues.

Eden diners and invitees brought home awesome premium items like Nail Spa gift certificates, jewelry from Aberdeen, a necklace from Officina del Tempo and a fab Jovida Diana bag.

Among the heroes with golden, caring hearts who joined the wish kids that evening were Maricar Pastrana Heleodoro, with her two adorable daughters; Cilbert Iscal Bonifer Edward Lee; Esmeralda Oh, tall, eye-catching beauty Martine Kua; Ken Ito's Annie del Mundo; Weatson Llamas of Wilbert Entertainment Inc., plus others like these whose wishes come true for these wonderful children, who never give up hope, palengues.

HOTSHOTS. RMR group product manager Jinggoy Revilla; Volvo senior sales manager Jojo Jack; Gulf Air country manager Robert Halcon; Javier Agojo, Bacnar Group of Companies chair Ambassador Buenaventa Esmaca Sr.; El Nido's PR and marketing manager Apple Lina; BMX executive VP Antoni Huang; Sta. Elena's Buenaventura and Sta. Elena GM Jovic Lukauna

HELPING the less fortunate is Maria Tschenga, daughter of former Spanish ambassador to the Philippines.

COOL. Nice Brobst

MAGNIFICENT Group's Leon Bautista

GEORGE Ogilvie president Geoffrey Co and Marchie Cuello

RAY-BAN'T get Dino Lauzon and Gabbie Arancenta, with professional race car driver Lory Up

Ray-ving

The ritzy chic, classy-looking neighbors are making waves again, palengues. Ray-Ban, the world's No. 1 eyewear, launched its partnership with Race Boss Inc. and Glipse-team at the homegrown SM Mall of Asia, palengues.

The lab happening kicked off with a bang, an awesome motorcycle stunt fine-line painting the whole town red inside the mall. George Optical's newest store was unveiled. It was followed by a fun cocktail reception at the Shoe Bistro.

The evening got rolling with Ray-Ban's Magic 8, composed of talented students from Miriam College, who entertained us with a beat-bulging belly dance number no less, dahlings.

The invitees were delighted to watch his professional car racer Lory Up in a hot pink car and wearing hot pink Ray-Bans.

All per racing enthusiasts, catch Ray-Ban's Hyper-win partnership at the Philippine Touring Car Championships in Subic and Batangas at 12 noon every Sunday on Studio 23.

Fore

The sun shone, palengues, and it was just what those hardcore golfers ordered for the Jack Nicklaus International Invitational held at the plush Sta. Elena Golf and Country Club, in cooperation with Gulf Air. Yes, Gulf Air, the home-to-the-Philippines airline that can, the Pinoy.

Gulf's slim Jaypee Agojo, one of the honorees at this sport having won tons of titles, was too visible. She was joined by hosts Buenaventura Group of Companies chair, the adorable Esmeralda "Sarmee Jr.," and EMI executive vice president, brilliant Arron Huang.

Other persons who have golf in their blood who were there included Sta. Elena's GM Jovic Lukauna, and Resorts Officer Tonio senior who manager Jojo Jack. Gulf Air's mega asset, country manager Robert Halcon, with golf in-marketing head, marketing beauty Jeanette Tengson, and El Nido's PR and marketing manager Apple Lina.

Over 288 Jack Nicklaus shoppers joined last time's warm welcome and winners. They will represent the country in the Jack Nicklaus International Invitational in November at Bear's Club, Jupiter, Florida, United States.

With an impressive score of 66, winners were Gary Ildefo and Felix Dennis Cortes. First runners-up Wilfred Ramos and Manfred Guanglen, each scoring a cool round, negotiated on Dalisay courtesy of Gulf Air, each. Second runners-up Alex Ignacio and Raul Gonzales each won round-trip tickets and a three-day, two-night accommodation with breakfast at El Nido Resort in picture-perfect Palawan, palengues.

Hey, nobody got a hole in one. He would have driven home the awesome, sleek Volvo S40. The second runners-up were three silver Volvo re-display palengues.

Loads of raffle prizes were also given away, including the Davidoff fragrance, awarded to the man of the hour, Rafael Magsaysay Puey Ayala Sycuyuan, Total Conference, Circadiene and Bag gift packs.

Hey, we had for a fun day of golf. Thanks to Sta. Elena Golf Club, Volvo, that award-winning airline Gulf Air, El Nido Resort and Island Transvoyage, among others.

SECOND runners-up Alex Ignacio and Raul Gonzales; champions Felix Dennis Cortes and Gary Ildefo; first runners-up Wilfred Ramos and Manfred Guanglen

SLIPSTREAM'S best Carlo Tirona

GOLF LOVERS. Alex Bonilla, Allan Macasaet, Vince Bonilla and Mitch Locsin

KAT HOMBOID and Mulan's Prince DJ, Travis Manuel

SLIPSTREAM'S boss, good looking Dominic Uy

RAY-BAN bosses include Jimmy Manolondo, Mon Tinanco and Mia de Leon

EAR RACING enthusiast Marco Atanacio

People may be unknowingly risking death every day

FAKE MEDICINES CAN KILL. At the very least, they are not effective against a disease or an ailment.

Injectables that contain ordinary fluid composed of water and salt and mixed with starch or talc "are particularly fatal," says Nonnito Lyons, president of the 40,000-strong Philippine Pharmaceutical Association.

"It is a nationwide problem," she says.

Beta-base capsulates launched by the Department of Health's Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD) have counterfeit fake medicines in diverse places such as Marinduque, Misamis Oriental and Zamboanga and General Santos cities.

Some of the fake medicines contained methotrimazine, cefazolin, cefuroxime, dydrogesterone, buprenorphine, glyburide and clotrimazole ethanesate.

Leyrna warns there have been several cases of deaths. "There have been reports of adverse effects ranging from dizziness to dizziness, from swollen eyes to difficulty in breathing or, worse, the fake drugs affect internal organs."

Some counterfeits have no ingredients at all, contrary to what they claim on the labels. Others are watered-down versions of the real ones. All the same, they debase consumers and deny ill patients the therapies that ease suffering and save lives.

"There are two ways a patient is affected, by adverse side effects or the patient is not cured (and may even) die if it is a fatal disease because there are insufficient ingredients or no active ingredient in the fake medicines at all," Leyrna tells InterAksyon.com.

Counterfeit medicines, as defined by the Agreement on Counterfeit Drugs, refer to the drug itself, or the container or labeling with or any likeness to that which is owned or registered in the Bureau of Patents, Trademark and Technology Transfer.

A drug is considered fake if the product is refilled in containers by counterfeited persons and the legitimate labels are used.

An unregistered imported drug product – except what is brought in the country for personal use – is also considered counterfeit. These cheat on the drugs that contain none of – or a different active ingredient or less than 80 percent of – the active ingredient it claims to possess.

Fake medicines affect people who need real, quality drugs the most: cancer and AIDS patients and those with heart diseases.

Of the 30 medicines the United States National Association of Boards of Pharmacy named in a list of medicines especially susceptible to counterfeiting, 23 are used in treating HIV/AIDS and cancer.

Counterfeiters favor these medicines because of their cost. Sixty tablets of a particular anti-HIV drug retails for around $600. Thirty-six tablets of an anti-cancer medicine used by people undergoing cancer chemotherapy retails for roughly $2,400.

"So, a Daily basis, many individuals unknowingly risk death or serious injury to their health by taking counterfeit pharmaceuticals," according to the Pharmaceutical Security Institute (PSI), a non-profit organization formed by drug companies to collate information on fake medicines.

In the Philippines, according to Samahan Laban sa Huwag Gamot, anything from cough syrups to life-saving antibiotics could be counterfeit.

Samahan is composed of the Department of Health, Senate and Congress, the Philippine Medical Association, Philippine Pharmaceutical Association, Drugstores Association of the Philippines, Mercury Drug Corp.; Watson's Personal Care Stores; Zuellig Pharma Corp.; Philippine Daily Inquirer; GMA Network Inc.; and Pfizer.

The Samahan has a toll-free hotline 11-800-10-FAKEGEDI where any information on suspicious counterfeit medicines can be reported.

The US FDA estimates that up to 15 percent of all sold medicines are fake, and, in parts of Africa and Asia, this figure exceeds 50 percent. It also estimates that fake medicines comprise approximately 10 percent of the global medicine market. InterAksyon.com

Why breast is best

BREAST MILK IS BEST FOR BABIES... even with competitive cup on.

It provides complete nutrition and its unique components offer optimal absorption of vitamins and minerals, preventing from harmful bacteria, and assistance in the digestion of fats.

Breast milk also has special growth factors and hormones that contribute to optimal development of the child. Its composition changes as the baby grows to meet the child's changing nutritional needs.

Breast milk is also a baby's first line of defense against infection. It provides antibodies and significantly lowers risks of common infant ailments.

Babies at risk of allergic diseases particularly benefit from breastfeeding, as it provides protection against allergies, eczema and eczema.

Research shows breastfeeding increases a child's intelligence quotient, reduces risk of obesity, improves the effectiveness of immunization, and enhances emotional security.

Breastfeeding is good for a mother's health, too.

Breastfeeding delays the return of ovulation and menstruation. LAM or lactational amenorrhea method is 98 percent effective in preventing pregnancy in the first six months as long as exclusive breastfeeding is practiced.

Mothers that breastfeed for at least six months have been found to have lower risk of breast, ovarian and uterine cancers.

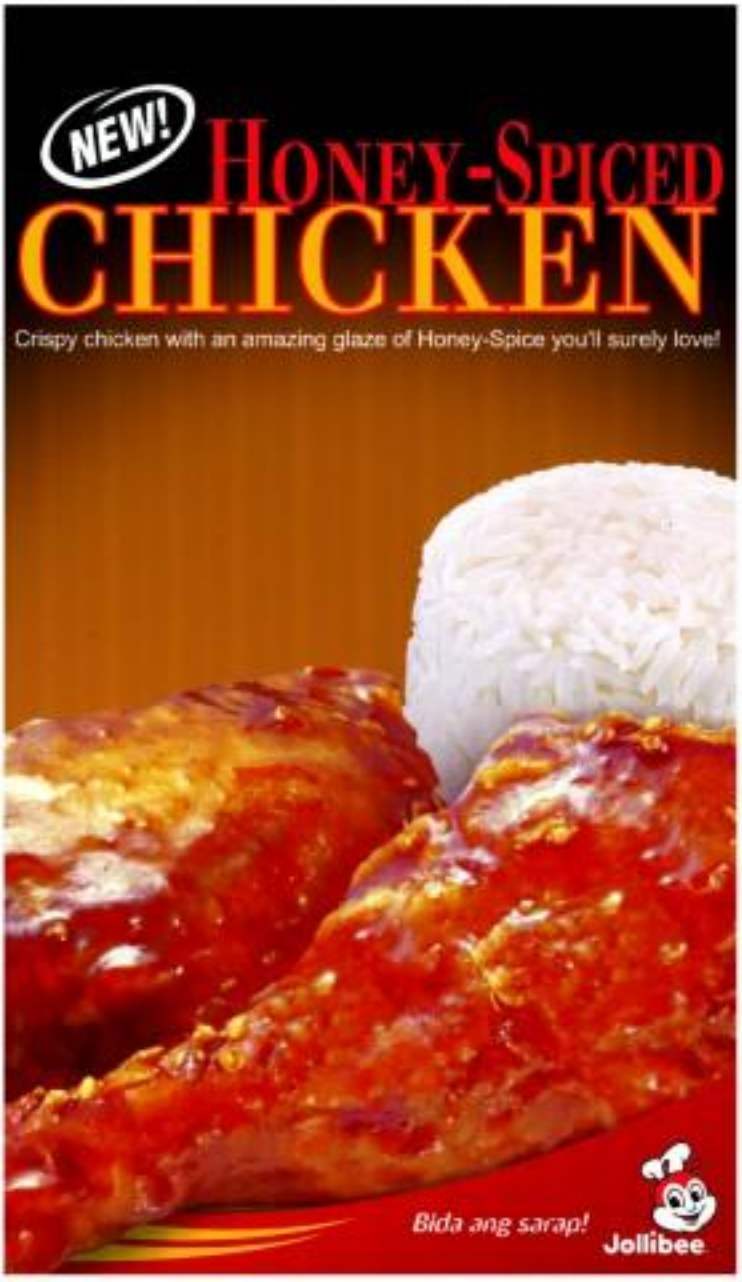
Breastfeeding also results in more rapid and sustained weight loss. Milk production uses 200-500 calories a day, equivalent to swimming 36 laps or riding a bicycle for one an hour.

Breastfed babies are less stressful to care for. Skin-to-skin contact and closeness afforded by breastfeeding result in improved bonding between mother and child.

Families spend less on health care costs and formula milk.

In fact, breastfeeding saves the country some P11.3 billion in formula milk imports.

Healthier babies also means less health expenditure. It is estimated that more than one million episodes of illness among babies translate into 91 billion in lost wages, P400 million out-of-pocket expenses for health facility visits, and P80 million for hospitalization.



THE FRESH section of Robinsons Supermarket is a haven for those who love fruits and vegetables.

SMALL households can benefit from precut vegetables the supermarket offers.

LIGHT ice cream is healthier dessert.

Shop for total wellness

ROBINSONS SUPERMARKET HAS launched its 'Eat Well Spend Less' campaign to promote total wellness for the family.

The hub of the new campaign is the supermarket's Fresh Section that offers a wide variety of fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry, dairy and seafoods.

Jody Badia, Robinsons Supermarket's general manager, said the wide selection of products and affordable prices were meant to encourage consumers to eat right.

The Fresh Section also carries hard-to-find items like dragon fruit, fresh cherries and raspberries. The Galleria branch also has organically grown fresh produce like arugula lettuce, chiea pumkin, broccoli, peanuts and radish; breads such as sunflower pita, cheese truffle and multigrain; and chilled juices made from organic vegetables like sugarbeets, cucumber and wheatgrass.

Other healthy finds include light and reduced-cheese, salt-reduced butter and other healthy substitutes made from Canola and sunflower oil, and a wide selection of low-fat milk and yogurts. Also available are 99-percent lean premium fresh meats and skinless chicken breast.

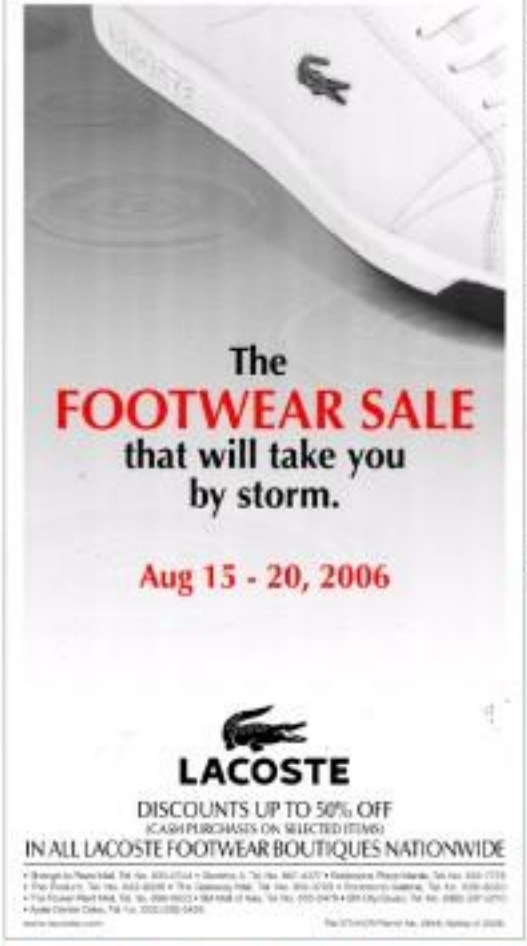
Robinsons Supermarket has special offers under the 'Eat Well Spend Less' campaign. The Apple Tag Specials offer selected products at slashed down prices.

Robinsons Supermarket also gives free information on health and nutrition through brochures and programs like free nutrition counseling, dental consultation, bone scanning, blood pressure testing, blood sugar testing and the like.

CHILLED juices made from organic vegetables are also available.

PESTICIDE FREE products like organic rice, which is high in fiber's, aid digestion.

SOFT reduced butter, as well as butter substitutes, are healthy options.



All about men's health

LEARN ALL ABOUT HIM IN THE LATEST issue of Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest's special men's health issue.

Among the issues tackled is why women outlive men. The cover story, "Slow and Aging," seeks to shed light on some key health reasons for the ill plus man.

Also in this issue are "What Men Don't Talk About," "Intimacy and Aging: Tips for Sexual Happiness," and "Hypertension and Erectile Dysfunction."

The article "Foods to Boost Your Brainpower" suggests foods, herbs and supplements that can help improve memory, concentration and focus. Also food-related are "Cure Your Indigestion" and "High Cholesterol: Cholesterol Basics."

Alzheimer's Disease at a Glance" gives some useful information on the aging-related disease.

Healthy Options Lifestyle Newsdigest is free at Healthy Options. Visit www.healthy-options.com.ph.

Dreams can become real

MAGKA-BAHAY sa PAG-IBIG
AS LOW AS P5,500 MO.*
LIONS PARK RESIDENCES
STA. ANA DRIVE, SUN VALLEY, PARAÑAQUE CITY
894-5568

In the search for the best that we can be, we have to begin with who we are

LIFE WOULD BE BETTER IF ...

- There was a happy pill that would instantly remove worries from our minds, pain from our hearts and aches from our bodies.
- A magic wand that could do a little zap and tech in your least desirable places so you can have a perfect 36 figure without surgery.
- You could down fashionably in an instant without spending minutes, even hours, in front of the mirror.
- Just one wish could transform your and other people's outlook in life.
- We could manage without sleep.
- Our bodies would never get sick or age.

There are just some of the fantasies of people who cannot accept reality as it is. They have their own ideas of what reality should be.

INSIDE OUT

CORY DIMPOSO

Utopian dream

All of us dream of a perfect world, perfect people and perfect situations. As they say, dreams are free and dreamers have the freedom to dream on. However, in the search for the best that we can be, we have to begin with who we are.

Reality check

Truth is, one has to begin somewhere. So, let's start.

- **Happy pill.** There is a happy pill. But it's an imaginary one. It is fashioned by the mind, fueled by the heart and sustained by determination. Yours, me, it works.

Color it green for abundance, pink for perfection, blue for healing, orange for energy, red for passion and love.

Whatever color you choose, know that it is your subconscious that is deciding. This prompts the mind to behave and feel in ways only you can control. So take it daily with no fear of an overdose. Smile!

- **Magic wand.** Much like a happy pill, the wand is all yours to create. Visualize it as made of light. It is so powerful it can also influence your mind to do anything, playing the impossible on the realm of possibilities.

Once you accept it, know that you will make that expression your own reality. Start pointing that wand at parts of you that require change.

Maybe you've been irritable and bitter lately? Point it at your head. That's a good place to start. The rest of you will need working on. And know that once your mind is made up, you will work toward your own improvement.

Ageless

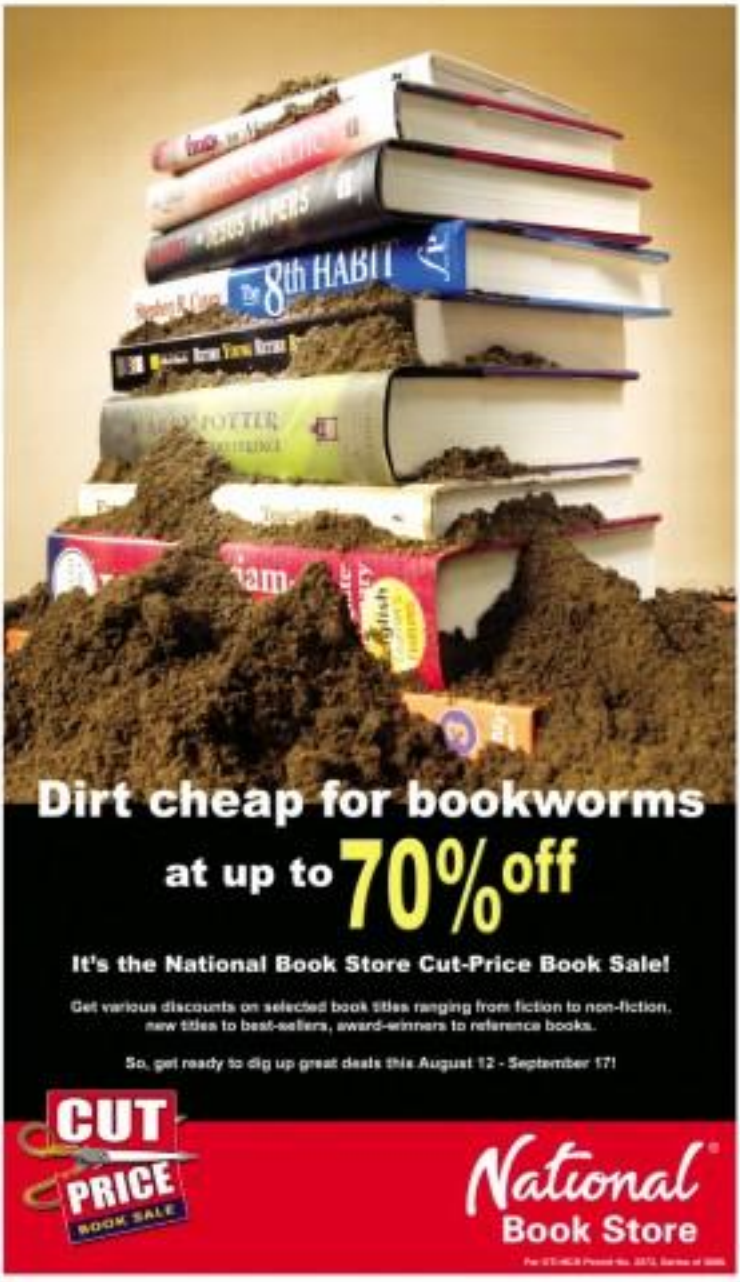
The fountain of youth is already inside you. As Deepak Chopra says in "Ageless Body, Timeless Mind," "Look to the land where no one is old. It is nowhere but in yourself."

Believing is paramount. And now your regimen: You must have the basic essentials. Right diet, right attitude, right exercise, right sleep, right work, right rest, right time for prayer and worship.

Your affirmation

"Everyday is a birthday for I renew myself each day!"

Love and light!



FOXTROT — BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN — BY JESS ABREN

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY — BY PH. JUNIOR

NUTS — BY PATRICK MCDONNELL

LOVEHOOTS — BY ELIZABETH CHOMKLO

ATOMO AND WEBBY — BY IVAN GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY — BY STEVEN PANLILIO

BIRD MACHINE — BY MAHAR ABREN

MAMADOMANS — BY JOHNO TUJOO

TULOOK — BY PAPI LAND TATUM PALAMBULAG

BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CRESSWORD

HOROSCOPE

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku — by Dave Green

1					2	3		
						9		
	5			3	8		1	7
		7		2				9
	1						3	
8				7		5		
9	7		2	4			6	
		3						
		2	8					4

Difficulty Level ★★

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	8	2	5	7	1	3	6	4
3	7	5	4	2	9	1	8	6
6	1	4	8	3	6	7	2	9
4	9	3	1	8	6	2	7	5
2	5	1	9	4	7	6	8	3
7	6	8	3	5	2	9	4	1
1	2	7	8	9	4	5	3	6
8	4	6	7	1	3	8	9	2
5	3	9	2	6	5	4	1	7

More questions and answers about paranormal phenomena

(Part 2)

IT IS SAID HERE OR THERE'S IN THE house is good luck. Is this true?

It depends on what type of dwarves you have around. If they are the positive or white ones, then yes. They may bring you good luck and good fortune. But if they are the negative or black ones, they may cause misfortune than good.

Dwarves belong to what are call earth elementals or nature spirits. Sylphs belongs to air elementals. Undines, water spirits and nixies belong to water elementals, and salamanders belongs to the elementals. The latter live in hot springs and volcanic lava.

How can I get rid of negative elementals in my house?

I suggest you don't attempt to drive them away yourself unless you are trained to do so. Otherwise, you may only bring more harm to yourself and your family. Ask a qualified and reliable psychic or medium-source exorcism to deal with them.

If you want to learn more about these invisible entities, read my friend's book "Dwarves and Other Nature Spirits: Their Importance to Man" published by Sun Publishing Corp. It is available in all the book stores in leading and selected branches of National Book Store and Powerbooks.

Is it really dangerous to use the Ouija Board?

No, because to use a Ouija Board the players have to open themselves up to the spirit world and call on a spirit to answer questions the contacted may not. Official in the board and suspicious spirits who mimic the Ouija Board.

The popular local version of the Ouija board is a facsimile of the Ouija, but the principle is the same.

I have known cases in which people were possessed by evil spirits after playing Spirit of the Glass. Some suffered a nervous breakdown. At least one woman had a spontaneous abortion as miscarriage after she played Spirit of the Glass.

Not one sense will what type of spirit will enter the players board. To avoid this possible or all ever. It is not prudent at.

Do all people have the Third Eye?

Yes. The so-called Third Eye is nothing more than clairvoyance, which everybody has. It is not really a physical third eye but merely a symbolic representation of inner knowing. Clairvoyance comes from two French words, which mean "to see already."

Although everybody has clairvoyance, some are more highly developed than others. It is the same as the ability to dance or sing. Everybody can dance and sing but some people are better at it than others.

A person with a so-called open Third Eye can see things (e.g. elementals, fairies, angels and other spirits) that ordinary people cannot see.

But, in reality, anybody can strengthen his few sad and psychic perception through practice and regular meditation.

There are several types of clairvoyance. One is seeing what's going on at present, and he is seeing the past (called retro-cognition). Another is seeing the future (called precognition). Still another is transporting one's senses to a distant place and describing it accurately. This is called traveling clairvoyance or remote viewing.

My fiancee (he only sees who have ESP before ceremony parapsychical or psychic powers?

No, even animals have ESP. There are many documented cases of dogs saving their masters from certain death by anticipating the collapse of a house, the occurrence of an earthquake or similar events.

Several books and articles have been written about animal ESP. Horses, for example, that a dog can tell whether his master, who is in a distant place, is coming home.

Dogs and cats, as well as horses, can sense the presence of spirits. Their sixth sense often is a person lost to them is about to die.

There is also evidence that dogs may have dreams because they exhibit rapid-eye movement (REM) while asleep. A person who is dreaming exhibits REM.

In which part of the brain is psychic ability located?

ESP is associated with the right side of the brain, according to some theory, the third eye is located in the pineal gland. Moreover, there is no hard evidence of this yet.

Intuition, enlightenment, synthesis, depth and perspective, quiet solutions, etc., all these belong to the right hemisphere of the brain. Analytical, logical, technical and mathematical thinking belong to the left hemisphere of the brain.

Geologist Roger Sperry discovered the specialized functions of the hemisphere of the brain for which he received the Nobel Prize for medicine, although he was not a physician.

How will meditation help me?

Dr. Herbert Benson, a cardiologist from Harvard Medical School, revealed the values of meditation in considering stress and anxiety. He believes meditation is the point of response of the body to an stress itself. He calls it the Relaxation Response, the opposite of the fight- or flight syndromes discovered by Dr. Hans Selye.

Regular meditation also helps one develop sensitivity to psychic forces.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licanco

The silent bone destroyer

PEOPLE MAY NOT BELIEVE ANY PAIN BUT THERE may already be suffering from osteoporosis.

This warning was issued by Dr. Tito D. Bautista, founding president of the Osteoporosis Society of the Philippines, who co-authored the first specialty book for Asians titled.

Bautista says osteoporosis, which literally means porous bones, "is a silent, progressive and debilitating illness." It makes bones thinner, more fragile and more likely to break.

The problem is often recognized only when it has become severe, or it progresses painlessly.

About 200 million women worldwide suffer from osteoporosis. The Philippine Statistical Statistics Office estimates, as of 2004, over nine million Filipino women aged 50 and above suffer from the disease. The figure may be higher as many cases are undiagnosed.

Among the latest medical products in the market for the management of the disease are oral bisphosphonates (once-monthly dosage) as all dose have been found to significantly reduce the risk of fractures.

Studies suggest that a once-frequent dosing regimen, such as a once-monthly fluidronate oral, improves adherence to a treatment program.

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THE SHOE went through a rigorous design and testing process at the Adidas lab in Portland.

Basketball shoe gets some brains

THE SHOE has a magnetic sensor in the heel that senses the level of compression.

A NEW VERSION OF "ROBOCMAN" will be the world's first intelligent shoe, Adidas_1, will be in the shoe's heel.

The totally new version of the technology, Adidas_1 Basketball, reportedly takes intelligence into professional sports.

The new footwear is supposed to be much more than a basketball shoe. It is expected to be the only shoe in the market that will be suitable for every basketball player.

The Adidas_1 Basketball is designed to sense every player's move during the game. Its technology allows it to "understand" that a player has different needs when running the court, jumping for a rebound or cutting and driving to the basket.

The shoe has been developed to continually adapt to cushioning to give the wearer the optimum level of comfort and performance suitable to his unique playing style.

The Adidas_1 Basketball shoe works with a magnetic sensor in the heel that senses the level of compression. The compression level is sent to the shoe's "brains," a microprocessor. The microprocessor then activates a motor that tightens or loosens the shoe's fit.

A mono-driven cable system adapts the cushioning to make the shoe softer or firmer as needed.

An Adidas_1 Basketball shoe wearer simply has to switch it on on the shoe can gradually adjust to find the optimum cushioning level. After use, the shoe may be switched off. It will also automatically turn itself off if the wearer forgets.

A light on the shoe blinks to tell the wearer hours the footwear is working, but not turned off. The shoe beeps checking for activity. If the had com- present again, the shoe "wakes up" and returns to "play mode."

If there is no compression after two hours, it moves to a softer setting and switches itself off, "stuff mode."

The Adidas_1 Basketball shoe recognizes different kinds of compression associated with basketball: extra, regular compressions for running; quick, extreme compressions for jumping and landing; longer, extreme compressions for cutting.

It filters all the data and develops a player profile, meaning it knows if the player does more running and cutting, or more jumping and landing. Once it recognizes the wearer's style, it can adjust more quickly when he goes from running to cutting, or from jumping to running.

The shoe continuously adapts to find the right level of cushioning for a person's needs and style of play.

A MOTOR-DRIVEN cable system adapts the cushioning to make the shoe softer or firmer as needed.

TWO-TIME NBA MVP Tim Duncan shows off Adidas_1 Basketball's performance-enhancing features

Leaving footprints in the sand

LIFE MAY BE A BEACH BUT IT is better enjoyed with the right shoes. Get shoes shoes for having a splash or engaging in water sports at Xports Central. The store carries a selection of beach sandals and shoes for all-day comfort and fun in the sand.

Here are some ideas for beach footwear:

► For relaxed sweet chic, flip-flops and thongs are colorful, comfortable and fashionable. They are lightweight, open and easy to manage. The footwear is especially designed to allow the sand to slide off easily.

► For cool casual wear, slides or beach slippers are appropriate. They combine lightweight comfort and sporty style. Some slippers have adjustable upper and Velcro closures, while others have rubber bases for heels.

► Outdoor sandals make walking on the sand and maneuvering through rocks easier and safer for the feet. The water-friendly rubber outsole has a high-grip lug pattern for traction that even suds up slightly to front to protect the toes. Designed with crossed nylon straps or quick-dash side buckles, these sandals deliver versatility and comfort.

► Aqua shoes are best for jet skiing, kayaking and windsurfing. Designed for action and the water, these shoes have drainage ports in the sole for quick grip on wet surfaces. Stretchy textile and molded overlay uppers provide great comfort. Cotton fit makes them more flexible and responsive.

The beach footwear collection is available at all Xports Central outlets in SM Megamall, SM City Fairview, SM City Manila, SM City Sucat, and SM City Sta. Mesa in Metro Manila. It is also available in SM City Iloilo, SM City Baguio, SM City Pampanga, and SM City Bacolod.

THE BEACH footwear collection will help ensure safety and comfort on the beach.

(FROM LEFT) Pendit area sales executive Benjo Aguilar, Cavite City Mayor Bimi Paredes, Kiss Mayor Dino Chua with Mile sports events executive Pat Gaccong during the 10th National Mile Marathon Cavite City elimination

PACESETTERS_ runners at the 28th National Mile Marathon Cavite City leg

Cavite marks fiesta with marathon

CAVITE CITY HOSTED A LEG OF the 28th National Mile Marathon as part of its fiesta celebration this year.

Joining the festivities in marking the event were Cavite City Mayor Bimi Paredes and Vice Mayor Dino Chua.

Jo Ann, who is gunning for a Top 3 finish in the National Finals in December is part of the Philippine Army Marathon Team. A regular participant of the National Mile Marathon, it was his first time to cop the 21-km race.

Talentino is also a veteran Mile marathoner, having participated in the last 16 years. Before his victory in Cavite, she placed seventh in the 26th Mile Marathon.

Paredes said he was glad Mile to chose their city as one of the venues of the national competition, especially as the Cavite leg coincided with the fiesta celebration.

The event also featured an interschool cheerdance competition. Participating students came from the elementary schools of Barangka, Julio Felipe and Manuel Xerxes, as well as the national high schools of Cavite and Noveleta.

Barangka Elementary School won in the elementary division while the Cavite National High School topped the high school division.

The National Mile Marathon is making its way to 30 cities all over the country to give more Filipinos a chance to enjoy the event.

The next legs of the marathon will be held on Aug. 20, Lucag; Aug. 27, Cebu; Sept. 3, Butuan; Sept. 10, Davao; Sept. 17, Cagayan de Oro; Sept. 24, Iligan; Oct. 1, Iligan; Oct. 8, Zamboanga; Oct. 15, Dagupan; Oct. 22, Tacloban; Oct. 29, San Fernando, La Union; Nov. 5, Ilgan; Nov. 12, Dipolog; Nov. 19, Cabanatuan, Nueva Ecija; and Nov. 26, Santiago, Isabela.

The 28th National Mile Marathon is held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel, Cebu Pacific, Adidas and Powerbar.

JOJIT de Asis and Ellen Talentino ruled the Cavite City leg of the 10th National Mile Marathon.

THOUSANDS of Caviteños enjoyed good, old-fashioned fun with friends and relatives.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ernesto G. Velarde

LIKN, PAOEL, ANGEL AND SANDA. They're young, they're sexy, and they want to be seen. Along with six others, they are known as **Elle Babes**, the new dancing girls on the longest running noontime show in the country. "Eat Bulaga." Story on page E5.

RP indie victory in Spain

A special jury prize for filmmaker Khavn dela Cruz

By Marinel R. Cruz

INDEPENDENT FILMMAKER Khavn dela Cruz bagged a special jury prize for his feature film "Mi Ultima Adios: Different Ways of Killing an Indio Bravo" at the recently concluded Internacional La Palma Digital Film Festival in Spain.

Dela Cruz won a free Director trophy in the same festival last year for his short film that competed in the main (short) section.

Also known as Iconvalley, the IDFLP was held from July 29 to 31 in La Palma, one of the seven Canary Islands in Spain.

One of the highlights of Iconvalley is the workshop which features short films created while the festival is ongoing. At the end of the week, a jury chooses the best one of the entries that follow on to one theme.

"Last year, the jurors got cuddled when, instead of making one or two short films, I made a dozen," Dela Cruz told Inquirer Entertainment in an exclusive interview in Makati City. "The rubbers were superheroes. That's why I called my work the 'Super Spanish Shorts.'"

"Mi Ultima," which won the Ultimate Award, is a "poetic documentary" on filial love, love of country and death. The film was shot in black and white in Spain.

"It's my newest work. It stars Spanish celebrity Celia Bravo," Dela Cruz said. "The festival organizers hook up filmmakers with local actors."

Also in exhibition at the week-long fest was Dela Cruz's "Goodbye My Shooting Star," with Aleydi featured as lead actress.

Dropped

Dela Cruz is the director of the full-length sci-

TO PAGE E2

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GALLERIA

1 MIAMI VICE - THX
2 CLICK
3 FIERCE PEOPLE
4 STORMBREAKER
5 SUKOB
6 LADY IN THE WATER
7 THE BREAK-UP
8 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
9 JUST MY LUCK
10 THE ANT BULLY

ERMITA

1 CLICK
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
3 FIERCE PEOPLE
4 STORMBREAKER
5 SUKOB
6 THE ANT BULLY
7 MIAMI VICE

METRO EAST

1 THE BREAK-UP
2 THE ANT BULLY
3 SUKOB
4 MIAMI VICE
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
6 JUST MY LUCK
7 CLICK
8 STORMBREAKER

NOVALICHES

1 CLICK
2 MIAMI VICE
3 WOLF CREEK
4 SUKOB

CITISQUARE MALABON | PIONEER

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
1 CLICK
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUKOB
4 STORMBREAKER

"MIAMI VICE" TRIVIA PROMO

Already aware of questions completely?
Fill in the missing letters to complete the right answer.

1. The creator of the Miami Vice TV Series
M _ _ _ _ L _ _ _ _

2. Plays the role of Sonny Crockett in the Miami Vice movie
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

3. Name Two place the character in the movie
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

4. In the TV Series, who played the part of Castro that wanted Sonny Crockett watched?
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

5. Where is he in the US Navy?
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4 CHAOS

DASMARIÑAS | ANGELES

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2 THE ANT BULLY
3 CLICK
4 SUKOB
1 CLICK
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 WILD ORCHID 2
4 SUKOB

IMUS | STARMILLS

1 WOLF CREEK
2 CLICK
3 SUKOB
4 THE BREAK-UP
1 YAMARA
2 SUKOB
3 CLICK
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 WOLF CREEK
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2

BACOLOD | ILOILO

1 SUKOB
2 CLICK
3 THE ANT BULLY
4 WOLF CREEK
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
6 WILD ORCHID 2
1 THE ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 CLICK
4 LADY IN THE WATER

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KWYH de la Cruz

RP indie ...

From page E1

sound like 'Lavenhia,'" one of the two entries dropped from the roster of the Quezon's Philippine Independent Film Festival last month.

"Lavenhia" was eliminated after Dela Cruz failed to submit the final copy on May 30, the deadline set by the festival's screening committee. The director, who was touring Europe at the time of the festival, said problems with submission of the material he wanted to enter to the film festival.

In his meeting with the festival's organizing committee last week, Dela Cruz said the Quezon officials asked him to finish the filming of "Lavenhia" using the P500,000 Quezon's seed grant. The Quezon also expressed interest in helping him secure additional funding.

"There is no definite timetable for 'Lavenhia.' I think it will be taken care of next year," said Dela Cruz in a phone interview on Thursday. "I want to redo everything. I don't want a project done in haste, considering that with this film and the work required here."

"Lavenhia" is the story of Edlin, a boy who runs away from home and ends up in the kingdom of Lavenhia, where he must resist the charms of the evil sorceress.

"My vision for the movie has changed," Dela Cruz said. "I want it to be more organic. Originally I wanted to integrate footage of Mt. Makiling, but I found that too taxing. I wasn't happy with the end product."

More exposure

Steve Aoue, Dela Cruz's other works have been showcased in different film festivals abroad. His short film "Our Daily Bread," about a Brooklyn, New York, 6-month hotdog, was featured at the 42nd Pesaro film festival in Italy, along with "Goodbye My Breaking Sea" Ho Lata at "Hooks" and screened as part of the World Cup festivities in Berlin.

Last month, another Indie filmmaker, Nora Aunor, was awarded the Premio Lido Mirabile Award at the competitive section in Pesaro for his short film "Masking Pelikula Bang Yang Indion Kasama? The Filipino film fest with the Cinema film "Looping" by director Lawrence Fajardo.

Meanwhile, Jeffrey Jeturian's "Rakenrol" has been officially selected to the Toronto International Film Festival on Sept. 7 to 16 and to the Vancouver International Film Festival on Sept. 28 to Oct. 11, according to its producer Joji Alonso of MLR films.

Stars 'dance' on ice in 'Skating with Celebrities'

FOR TWO TUESDAYS NOW, we've been viewing "Skating with Celebrities" at 9:30 pm, Tuesdays on the 2nd Avenue channel. We've had such a good time watching the new reality challenge that our urge now is to join in the ice-skating revolution as well.

We're all familiar with the celebrity dance edition (TV "Starring with Celebrities" type this term in terms of difficulty by requiring stars and starlets to dance—while thinking not!

This is no difficult to do, that the celebrities practice for one whole month! That is much more than the week-more per two celebrity dance challenges.

To raise the premium on the celebrities a bit, they are given skating partners who are champions on the national and international levels.

Because former champions like Nancy Kerrigan make sure that their celebrity partners are well-trained, and put through their paces during many hours of practice sessions before they finally unveil their acts on TV.

Adding to the excitement of the competition is the inconsistent degree of difficulty that it requires its contestants to master. Each week, the bar is raised in terms of fancy moves that the dancers must execute on ice, and if they fail to execute properly their scores are reduced.

The danger of course, is that the contestants get so focused though their moves disasters huddle. That's what happened last Tuesday, when a celebrity fell while executing a requisite fancy twirl.

The gaffe proved to be fatal for his team, which ended up with the lowest score, and was thus summarily eliminated from the competition.

Another stressful factor in the fill is the tough scores taken by some of the judges. Recently Hannelli took to be kind, but the rare stern judge, especially this show surrounding, can be nasty giving Simon Cowell a run for her bitter outbursts.

The contestants can get to be so harsh that some of the contestants verge close to tears or rage. But they're professional enough not to throw a tantrum, and the critics don't keep them on their toes to the end.

To date, the strategy has worked. Sure to new Tuesday to see who will trust the ultimate remaining team. Check—and survive their really objective worlds.

'Train Collision'

National Geographic Channel's "Crash Scene Investigation" airs "Train Collision" tonight at 9. The show investigates why a freight train with over 100 tank loaded cars collided with the Super Continental passenger train at 90 kph in 1995 outside Silsbee, Texas.

The investigation exposed appalling everyday practices of the train conductors and crews, forcing management around the world to redefine railway safety standards.

Other telecasts: "Runway Train" at 10 p.m. on Aug. 22 and "Greek Fiery Disaster" at 10 p.m. on Aug. 29.

'Red Box Karaoke'

Red Box is one of the hottest sing-along joints in Metro Manila. Located at Greenbelt, Makati, it has the latest in videoke equipment, and the best sounds, and the place has been imagined in celebration with. Miss Secrets in the "Red Box Karaoke" album.

Get inside "Before I Let You Go" by Dreamcatcher, "Slave" by Sharon Cuneta, "Walang Iba Kung Maraming," by Gigie Alcasid, "Forgotten" by Regine Velasquez, and "Forever's Not Enough" by Sarah Geronimo.

New album

Gazebo launched its sophomore album, "Back to Us," on "SOP" last Aug. 13, and the album will hit stores tomorrow. Emily Jacinto of the album will be given a send that outside there to a free pass to the band's grand album launch at Robinson's Galleria Mezzanine 2 today. The 10 new tracks in "Back to Me" were all sent. Invite the band members themselves.

Nestor U. Torre

VIEWFINDER

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

The producers say EB Babes underwent not only dance training but also workshops in personality development and acting

FROM left, Kris, Bella, Joy, Mae and Sam

HEIDENG and Mae

SAUDI and Maxie

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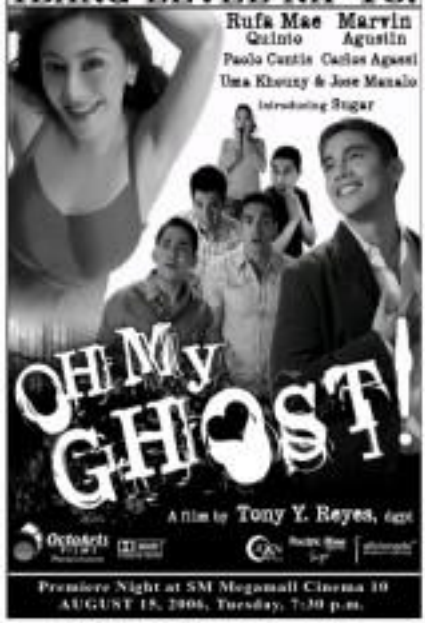

Premiere Night at SM Megamall Cinema 10
AUGUST 15, 2006, Tuesday, 7:30 p.m.

Young, sexy and chasing same dream

Triple treat with Mig, The Dawn

IT'S A TRIPLE TREAT tonight at the "Switched On" concert at the Araneta Coliseum, with Mig Ayesa (third placer in last year's global search for the Asian band's new front man) as guest singer and with The Dawn open-ing the show.

SHOW TIME

It is, DAZE first visit to the Philippines, and the initial step in the home leg of its concert world tour.

Stars and photos by Nito Vicera

THEY'RE YOUNG, they're sexy and they want to be stars.

Forty hundreds of pretty young girls, 18 received what the longest-running reunion show "Eat Bulaga," aired over GMA 7, has dubbed as the first reality-based talent search for the show's dancers.

Last week, these girls, now known as the EB Babes, were presented to entertainment writers at Eleven in Quezon City.

"We were looking for girls who had all-around talents—not just dancers," said Malou Choa-Fagar, executive vice president of Television and Production Enterprises (TAPE), which produces the noontime show "the wanted girls who could sing and emote act. We needed them to act for our Daily Week episodes."

The total talent package naiwells everything the EB Babes will primarily serve as back-up dancers in the opening and closing routine of the show, as well as in 11 game show portions. They will also vie up the action fac and be part of the contra that the hosts poll off to spice up the show.

The EB Babes are replacing the Sexbombs, who left the show in late March. There are no hard feelings, crying one of the dancers. Last April, "Eat Bulaga" launched the nation-wide search. The EB Babes were officially launched on show last Saturday.

The search, Fagar explained, was not limited to pretty faces and sexy bodies. The finalists had to undergo five weeks of grueling workshops before the final 14 were chosen.

They were given personality development classes, courtesy of one time Ms. Pilipinas Nina Ricci Aguilos, many are sessions supervised by Bonnie Roberts and acting workshops conducted by Gina Alajar. Seven choreographers Shaneen Bichara and Gideon Argente gave the dance classes, which included hip-hop, jazz and belly dancing.

In the Q&A portion during the press launch, the girls refused the same to-basic. "We wanted to be discovered on stage. We wanted show our talent."

"It's too early to say if any of them will become big," Fagar noted. "But that's not the bottom line."

The EB Babes had dropped out of school to concentrate on the job. Each of received a cash prize of P200,000—a far cry to some of the cash prizes P500,000 realized with their.

"MIAMI VICE" TRIVIA PROMO

Answer the "Miami Vice" trivia questions in our daily movieguide. Cut and drop entries at any Robinsons Movieworld branch on or before August 15. Winners will get any of the following:

- Cinema Plaza Galleria Movie Gift Certificate
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*winners will be notified via registered mail only

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ENTERTAINMENT

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RP's first multimedia star

Tita Muñoz says she was 'embarrassed' about being dubbed 'Elizabeth Taylor of the Philippines'

Photos by Roger Cooper

TITA...sister of six siblings, is shown here with (from left) Rafael, mom Felicia, Louie, Manuel, dad Miguel and Leopoldo.

AT A poetry reading in the 1970s

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

VETERAN STAR TITA MUÑOZ WAS IN the middle of a history of medical woes, including a colonoscopy, and yet she was so feisty as ever, recounting the glory days as if they were unfolding on a silver screen in front of her.

How best to summarize a multifaceted life like hers—what it seems she has had scores of—curveballs in the lifetime alone?

In a lot of ways, she can be the country's first multimedia star. Seeing conquered radio, stage and both the small and big screens.

Dubbed the Elizabeth Taylor and Jennifer Aniston of the Philippines, she retained dual (and lofty) celebrity.

Now newer, more fervent hatchet strokes have carved more sets, scratching her 1,068 Mile del Sol and Elsa Oria at work: "I went to St. James Academy, which was near the Sampaguita Pavilion," she said.

But Tita wasn't keen on becoming a movie star. "I didn't speak a word of Tagalog."

After World War II, 10-year-old Tita married an American, who took her to live in New York. "He was an officer, navigator in the Air Force," she recalled.

It was an unhappy marriage, one that lasted only four years, during which she lost a nine-old. Only who had been born prematurely.

"The doctor made a goddamn error," Tita said. "I wanted to jump out of a running car when he refused to point me a divorce. He agreed only after I promised to go back to the Philippines."

Back in Manila but jobless, the 22-year-old divorcee took stock of her skills. "I spoke better English than most people and I could do a lot of time listening to the radio in New York. Maybe radio was the best option, I thought. A cousin accompanied me to the newest radio station there, DZBB, owned by Bob Stewart."

There were a hundred people in the queue. Still, the Spanish mestiza was hired to replace Rose Rosal as the new host of "Entertainers' Club of the Air."

"It was a two-hour morning show, from 11 a.m. to 12 noon," she said. "I became the newest Entertainer. My first salary for was P300 a month. My mother said: 'That wouldn't even pay for the clothes you are wearing.'"

She assured her mother that the lowly job was just a stepping stone for brighter prospects. True enough, Tita received two offers after only months.

One was a radio job with mestiza "the Columbia, "a legendary drama star."

From the DZBB, she moved to dyRL, since station of dyRL "I hosted the 'Women's Club of the Air.' By then, I was earning P800 a month, a big sum in the 1950s."

Meanwhile, she had also become a Camera Girl.

Although she was already a radio star, she quit and willfully went back to school, at the Lyceum, where she finished AB History.

The new graduate was offered a teaching job. "For 35 an hour! On the radio, I was earning P50 a minute."

She eventually became the highest-paid radio talent, earning P75 a minute.

Whether older wins on radio, the mestiza once again bedeviled.

"The dyRL office was on the fourth floor of the Republic Building on Avenida. On the third floor was Bishop Cirajido. Whenever I was free, I hung out with my friend, entertainer-editor Bert Gonzales, who was the magazine's editor."

It was Gerie who convinced the reluctant Tita to try the movies.

Big-screen debut

In 1952, Tita made her big-screen debut in "Mandaluka," a romantic musical set in the mills and screaming sombs.

Produced by Philippine Artists Management, Tita's first movie co-starred Rodolfo Reis and launched her as the country's Elizabeth Taylor. "I came my hair short (like Liz Taylor's. But I was embarrassed by the title because I never considered myself a great beauty," she gasped.

Tita's second movie, "Kasaysayan ng Isang Conception," in which she played Elsa Oria.

Tita Dorimacon proceeded to appear in a string of movies: Sucesos Artist Eddie Romero's "El Indio" (with Oscar Keesee), "Bituin ang Kapalaran" (with Jaime Fabregas), Carlos Padilla and "Bilang Pugot" (with Fred Montilla).

But Tita was eyeing a new multimedia television.

Over the roadblocks she took part in the first televised sound, a parly held at Antonio Quintos's home, aired on dyAG-TV.

"I was the first woman to appear on [local] television," she asserted. "I was also the first woman to become a production manager. Our big boss was Koko Trinidad and I worked in the TV station with Vic Pedroso, Gabby Tolentino and Nelly Legarda."

And from the First Lady of television also made history with the first lasting scene on the boob tube. "It was with Ronald Reese; I pitched him because he was near."

Tita broke new ground with dramatic TV shows. "The most memorable were 'Sorry, Wrong Number,' [a one-woman telephone thriller that was part of the 'Cabon Caveone' and directed by National Artist Gerry de Leon, "she related. Later, she became a regular on "Balintawak."

She was also directed by Dr Leon in a local ("Like" in 1971) and international movie ("Mad Doctor of Blood Island" in 1968).

She made two international movies with another National Artist, Lamberto V. Avellana. "One was shot in Hawaii with Vic Silayan and the other one in Malta," she said.

Consulting the filmmaker's 1600s one for Ariel life sees Leon's movie is without it, yielded Chinese titles "Destination: Montana" (1968) and "The Bird Within" (1970).

The said she thoroughly enjoyed her shows abroad. "I brought home an acolic and won the Permanente dress as prizes," she recalled.

PHIL Miss Intercontinental 1964 Gemma Cruz. Tita participated in the Cinderella Film Festival in the 1960s. "It was a big success. King Sisvelous Bhumidi was so happy, he invited us again the following year."

Brocka, Bernal

Back in Manila, she was directed by yet another National Artist, Lino Brocka, in the 1971 melodrama "Stateless."

She looked back: "Lino was a fun worker, always prepared, and he spoke, machine-gun style—intense."

She was directed by still another National Artist, Ishmael Bernal, in "Nagsi in Egipt" (1983) and "Pahiram ng Isang Umaga" (1989).

"I had known Ishmael for a long time. I used to do poetry readings in his bar, Where's Conchy. **Incendiary in Your Soul**, in the early 1970s. I would meet Ishmael in ladies' dresses and work on Gary Granados."

She was good friends with theater directors Rudolfo Tinio and Jonas Sebastian and filmmakers Elwood Perez and Joey Gosiengfiao.

In the 1970s, she championed the theater troupe Dicang Candaycha, which was famed as the Filipino-born first university in Hawaii.

All her movies were directed, and starring from one multistarrer to another, took its toll. In the mid-1990s, she suffered a stroke. "I had just started writing a column for Mirror magazine when I fell ill."

She had fully recovered, when she slipped in the bathroom months later.

"My spine is studded with nuts fractures. After I broke my hip bone, I couldn't find the right bone helper, so I stayed in a convalescent home run by the OSM sisters in Bonsol, Laguna."

Inflamed, however, didn't stop her from acting in the movie "Madrasta" in 1997 and on the TV show "Kung sa Iba na Siya" in 2002.

These days, she lives in her own condo unit in San Juan, where she entertains longtime pals Nonoy Noriz and Inday Gonzales with homecooked meals—and anecdotes about her character, it's a bit anxious and colorful journey through life.

SUBJECT of a photo study by Ramoy Wong

A BEACH break in Camiguin

1961 Cambodia...right...attending a film festival with Miss International 1960 Gemma Cruz, center

Loving work and making love work

ALFRED VARGAS AND LI RITO have finally come out in the open about their relationship. Li was all aglow when I asked her about Alfred. "He's super sweet. Kinis waiting, occasion, he gives me flowers. When really touched me was when he invited me over to dinner. They had a nice long talk about me. That's when I felt he's sincere and serious."

Alfred admits he's the jealous type. "I'm possessive but not to the point of being crazy. Even if there are both on set here, their careers remain their priority. Li and Alfred are one of the few showbiz couples who love their work but also manage to make their love work.

Another child?

Cebu Municipal of Manila Governor Alfredo Marcelino of Manila Governor Alfredo Marcelino also allegedly hosting another love child aside from Sunshine. "Before, I never let her only boss son son," said Gina.

He was man enough to admit he had sired a kid, who would be little another year? Perhaps the parties insisting that Jolo has an overexposed child should come forward with a validated claim and proof of paternity?

Next 'Balintawak'

SOMEBODY close to Tita Duterte Villa told me that when the said hubby Head Carlo Caparas had a reunion with MEN-DBN, Ed Aquino asked if the could play "Balintawak" when Head's comic novel is made into a movie. Now GMA 7 is coming up with the TV remakes of the Pinoy classic ride about a romance born with a traditional fare for whom Brissy attitude made her a fighter.

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

Rosa Aunor portrayed Balakang in 1978. The Espino opponents or still deliberating who will be the next one. Noted that it's a non-stop between Angel Locsin and Sunshine Dizon. But wouldn't it be more interesting if they conducted a search for a new role like Balakang and give her a major make-over for the actress? That would be like a reality show within a movie/s!

Finger-pointing

ITS Media was fascinating that Ms Sharon Cuneta and Kris Aquino should have been the one running [unint] of her. She sometimes about Amy getting married on the set of the next to Mercuroids were replying with accusers. Why doesn't she clean up her act before pointing a finger at others?

Crying lady

RUFFA Mae Quinto broke down at the GMA studio after her interview on "Startalk." An insider says Ruffy cried because she could no longer take the nasty comments about her relationship with Rich Ilustre. Reminds me: he's gay when he's down. But Rich's romance should not distract him of such talks.

I texted Ruffy for her statement. She texted back: "I'm here for rich. Answer naman niya. And nothing else. Is totally true. Ok and goodnight na lang dun naman ang dinaramdam. Maintayo din dito in." Knowing how deeply Ruffy loves, no second-guessed by her ignore. A deep not to heal. Live and let live! Love and let love, right Jhyne (That's how I call Ruffa Mae.)?

Westlife concert

VIVA Concerts, which produced the recent Westlife concert of The Black Eyed Peas, is out to win the hearts of Pinoy concert goers with another date-bang they've banal Westlife back to Manila on Sept. 4 at the Araneta Coliseum. For tickets, call 911-5555.

New albums

"Kanta ng APO Mona" (Universal Records) is undoubtedly the music's greatest album of 2006, with 16 songs from Apo Hiking Society's illustrious musical career performed by 15 leading Pinoy bands and three astronauts: Ang Bandang Shamrock X is truly one new collection featured are Pandora Si Sigar ("Pamaypay ng Ulan"), Orange & Lemons ("Sakay Sa Bilog"), Kamikazee ("Ito Bilog"), and Kitchie Nadal ("Pag-ibig"), to name a few.

"Shaman Shrines," a new album under EMI-Philo "Awit ng Pasay" is a collection of 14 OPM love classics. It includes Apo's "Where I Am You," Ken Jacinto's "Kahit Na," Sharon's "Sometimes," Magkaisa's ang Walang Hanggan," and Gary V's "Bulaklak Ka," among others. Also featured is "Kailangan Ko, Kailangan Mo," the Gerome King's duet with Regine Velasquez.

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